Faizi

A Passage to India

MASTER GUIDE

TO

A Passage to India

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E. M. FORSTER

LIFE, WORK & PERSONALITY

E.M. Forster, writes Virginia Woolf, is "an author about whom there is considerable disagreement. There is something baffling and evasive in the very nature of his gifts".[1] He has written only five novels, the last *A Passage to India* appearing as long ago as 1924, but his place among the writers of contemporary fiction is unique. He is both a traditionalist and an experimentalist. The bulk of his fiction was written before Mrs. Woolf and D. H. Lawrence were in the field. Neither Henry James nor the French Naturalists could have written as Forster has done. Yet he links up the past and the future of the English novel. Christopher Isherwood thinks, "Forster's the only one who understands what the modern novel ought to be."[2] Dr. F. R. Leavis remarks : "Mr. Forster's is a name that, in these days, we should peculiarly honour".[3]

E.M. Forster is a happy blend of the old and the new. If he has some affinities with Jane Austen and George Meredith, he also rubs shoulders with D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf. From the chronological point of view, his novels belong to the Edwardian era, but spirit-

1. 'The Novels of E. M. Forster' in The Death of the Moth and Other Essays, P. 140 (Penguin Modern Classics).
2. Lions and Shadows : An Education in the Twenties, 1938, P. 173.
3. The Common Pursuit, P. 277 (1952).

ually he is a Georgian. Some regard him as the last remnant of that once-powerful "Bloomsbury Group" which dominated English intellectual life during the years that succeeded World War I. B. Ifor Evans finds in him "The supreme example of the very aristocracy of liberal intellectualism[1]." G. S. Fraser regards him as "the best modern English novelist of the liberal tradition".[2] Lional Trilling maintains that Forster is "the only living novelist who can be read again and again" and who gives "the sensation of having learnt something".[3] To I. A. Richards, however, Forster appears to be "on the whole the most puzzling figure in contemporary English letters".[4] And Harold Nicolson wonders "why in the age of Joyce, Lawrence, Eliot and Virginia Woolf he should be mentioned with hushed awe"[5]. The fact is that Forster has kept his head above all modern literary controversies and he is possibly the only living British novelist who can be discussed without fatuity against the highest and the gaudiest standards.

Edward Morgon Forster was born in London on New Year's Day, 1879. His father was an architect of outstanding repute and his mother came of an intellectual middle-class family. He got his early education at Tonbridge as a "dayboy," but he did not like the atmosphere of that public school. It was a bitter experience of his life. Later on, he bitterly criticized it in his novels. Tonbridge appears to be the 'Sawston' of his first two novels, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* and *The Longest Journey.* Forster faithfully records his unhappiness of those school days in these novels. This makes them at least obliquely autobiographical. The history of Sawston School in Chapter IV of *The Longest Journey* follows very closely the actual history of Tonbridge school.

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1. English Literature Between the Wars, 1948, p. 28.
2. The Modern Writer and His World, p. 58 (1961) (Rupa & Co. Calcutta-13)
3. E. M. Forster—A Study, 1944, p. 9.
4. Passage to Forster, The Forum, Dec. 1927.
5. A Review of Marianne, The Observer (London), May 13, 1956.

The Public Schools, Forster thinks, do not create individuals ; they produce only types. The public school system is at the root of England's worst national faults and most grievous political errors. For, he says, the faults of England are the faults of the middle classes that dominate it, and the very core of these middle classes is the English public school system, which gives its young men a weight out of all proportion to their numbers and sends them into a world "of whose richness and subtlety they have no conception," a world into which they go "with well-developed bodies, fairly developed minds and under-developed hearts". And it is this under-developed heart that is largely responsible for the difficulties of Englishmen abroad. An underdeveloped heart—not a cold one.[1]

From Tonbridge Forster went on to King's College Cambridge. There he found an atmosphere congenial to his heart's desire—an atmosphere quite contrary to that of a public school. In Cambridge, "individuals were respected, not herded together ; ideas were discussed ; not forced down the throat."[2] Here Forster studied the classics and history and formed an important friendship with the professor, critic and author, G. Lowes Dickinson. Forster was greatly influenced by Dickinson's aesthetic and literary ideas and he, later on, wrote his biography in 1934.

The years which Forster spent at Cambridge were, perhaps by immediate contrast, extraordinarily happy. Under congenial atmosphere Forster quickly blossomed as a scholar, a writer, and most important, as a human being.[3] It is possible, as is suggested by Lionel Trilling in his excellent book on Forster, that his dislike of his public school and his love for Cambridge came somehow to symbolize for him the poles of oppressive regimentation and that kind of knowledge which is perfect wisdom. Certainly in his case, as in the case of all people, the

1. Notes on the English Character (Abinger Harvest).
2. Rex Warner : E. M. Forster, P. 7—8.
3. Karl and Magalaner—A Reader's Guide to Great 20th Century English Novels, P. 101.

experiences of childhood and youth were of the greatest importance.

After graduation in 1901, Forster decided to see for himself the seat of classical civilization and he visited both Greece and Italy. He was at his most productive in his middle twenties. He began to produce, at irregular intervals, literature of various types. His first novel *Where Angels Fear to Tread* appeared in 1905 when he was only twenty-six. That he started writing so early, is a significant point in itself as it shows the modern tendency of his writings. He had to rely mostly on ideas rather than on a comprehensive experience of life, which he had not possessed as yet.

Where Angels Fear to Tread was praised as "a very striking and original piece of work" in a contemporary article on Forster which appeared in *The Bookman* in June, 1907. Arnold Bennet remarked : "Mr. Forster is a young man...If he continues to write one book a year, he will be the most fashionable novelist in England...If he writes solely to please himself, forgetting utterly the existence of the elite, he may produce some first class literature".[1]

Forster, unfortunately, could not become the most fashionable novelist in England, but he *did* produce a really "first class literature" in his last novel *A Passage to India*. A part of Bennet's prophecy thus proved true. Within the next five years appeared *The Longest Journey* (1907), *A Room with a View* (1908), and *Howards End* (1910). And there Forster stopped, as if to look back at his own achievement and to watch the public reaction to his work. He was praised for his poetic imagination, his gift of irony, wit and humour and his urbane art, and above all, for his innate understanding of the moral dilemmas of the upper middle class people of Edwardian England.

All these four novels followed similar lines. They

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1. Books and Persons—Past Epoch, 1908-11, P. 293.

portrayed, with subtle irony, the reactions of the English upper middle classes to unusual situations and exposed their predicaments with sympathy and insight. It is of much interest to note that Forster himself had the tradition of English middle-class culture and he was well aware of its hypocrisy and lack of imagination. He himself writes of this class in his essay 'Notes on the English Character':

> "They gained wealth by the Industrial Revolution; political power by the Reform Bill of 1832; they are connected with the rise and organization of the British Empire; they are responsible for the literature of the nineteenth Century. Solidity, caution, integrity, efficiency. Lack of imagination, hypocrisy."

And it is these last two qualities which are chiefly the target of Forster's satire in all his novels. As a picture of the intellectual and emotional environment of Forster's young days, however, these novels remain unparalleled source material.[1]

During the war of 1914-1918 Forster was stationed in Egypt. His stay over there produced a set of short witty sketches *Pharos and Pharillon* in 1923. He made two trips to India (1912 and 1921) which provided him material for his fifth and the master-piece novel *A Passage to India* (1924). To quote Lowes Dickinson, in *A Passage to India*. Forster has given us indeed—'a classic on the strange and tragic fact of history and life called India.' It was a fruit of his first-hand knowledge of Indian life. With it Forster entered into a fuller recognition of his powers as a writer.

Forster has also experimented with the short story. His first volume of short stories was published in 1914 under the title *The Celestial Omnibus And Other Stories*. It contained: *The Story of a Panic*, *The Other Side of the*

1. Carl and Magalaner: A Reader's Guide to Great 20th Century English Novels, P. 102.

Hedge, *The Celestial Omnibus*, *Other Kingdom*, *The Curate's Friend*, and *The Road from Colonnius*. The second volume of his short stories came in 1928 under the title *The Eternal Moment and Other Stories*. This volume contained : *The Machine Stops*, *The Point Of It*, *Mr Andrews*, *Co-ordination*, *The Story of the Siren*, and the *Eternal Moment*. Some of these stories are of particular interest because they contain in embryo the themes, symbols and ideas of Forster's five novels.

In the meantime, Forster continued to write literary essays, travel notes, and reviews at a steady speed. They are collected together in his *Abinger Harvest—A Miscellany* (1936). It is a collection of about eightly essays and articles contributed to English and American periodicals between the years 1903—36. Another collection of his essays is entitled *Two cheers for Democracy*, published in 1951. These essays were written during the period 1936—50, and are mainly preoccupied with social, political and ethical problems.

Forster has written some fine literary criticism in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927). These literary essays were the result of annual Clark Lectures which Forster was invited to deliver at Cambridge in 1927. In 1941, he delivered The Rede Lecture, at Cambridge on *Virginia Woolf*. In 1944, he delivered The W. P. Ker Memorial Lecture, at Glasgow, on *The Development of English Prose between 1918 and 1939*. He has also written critical introductions to the following works :—

1. *The Aeneid of Virgil* : E. Fairfax Taylor's translation (1906).
2. *Original Letters from India*, 1799—1815 : by Mrs. Eliza Fay (1931).
3. *Flowers and Elephants* : by Constance Sitwell (1937)
4. *The Life of George Crabbe* in *The World's Classics* (1932)

5. *Twenty Years A-Growing :* by Maurice O' Sullivan (1933).

6. *Untouchable :* by Mulk Raj Anand (1936).

7. *The Banned Books of England :* by Alec Craig (1937).

Forster visited India again in 1945 to attend the P. E. N. Conference. He speaks very highly of his Indian experience : "If Indians had not spoken English my own life would have been infinitely poorer".[1] He had friendly feelings for this country. This is evident from his biography of the Maharajah of Dewas, Sir Tukoji, with whom he worked, in 1921, as his Private Secretary. This biography is entitled *The Hill of Devi* (1953). This book throws a great light on the actual background of *A Passage to India.*

Forster is still living, but he has stopped writing fiction. His latest published work is *Marianna Thornton*, a Domestic Biography (1956). He had started one more novel *Arctic Summer*, but he could not finish it due to some "fiction technicalities" as he calls them.[2] It is just possible that he might have completed it by now and wants it to be published as a posthumous work. Critics have in vain hoped to have another Forster novel, but perhaps, as G. S. Frazer has pointed out, Forster had realized after completing *A Passage to India* that "the curtain had risen on a new scene, that the world after the war was not the world he had grown up in, and that he could not write with his old mastery about a shifting society of which he was no longer intimately a member ; so in the last thirty years, though he has written some charming books of criticism, essays, and memoirs, he has produced no fiction."[3]

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1. India again in Two Cheers for Democracy, 1952, P. 330.

2. E. M. Forster's address at the Aldeburgh Festival of 1951, while he read before the audience a part of this unfinished novel "Arctic Summer".

3. The Modern Writer and His World, P. 56 (Rupa & Co.)

Forster is a complex writer. In Forster's novels, says G. S. Fraser, "we feel as we do not feel in Galsworthy's or Bennet's or in Kipling's or in Conrad's either that a philosophical mind is at work".[1] Edward Garnett finds in Forster "an exquisite soloist" and wishes to hear "an orchestra again". But Forster is silent. Perhaps he does not wish to be repetitive. He has scaled the heights of fiction in *A Passage to India* and there he stands, on a firm rock, unshaken by the "stream of consciousness" technique which sweeps past his feet. Here and there a wave touched him but he remained adamant watching the flow of the stream of fiction with steady looks. On the whole, he is not optimistic about the future of the English Novel. He thinks that the social situation is not suitable for fiction. Fiction has traditionally depended on a fixed class structure which is lacking in the modern world "I think there is a better future for poetry than for fiction", he says.[2] And that perhaps gives a possible clue to his long silence since 1924.

As a man Forster is "notoriously diffident", but he is "a sociable one who enjoys conversation."[3] "To meet Forster is to like him", says R. G. Shahani. "The man is bigger than his books."[4] His social attitudes are those of a cultivated and liberal English gentleman. He believes in liberal humanism, in the sanctity of personal relationships, and, above all, in individualism. Though not an orthodox moralist, he believes in a certain ethical code and incorporates it into each of his works. He attaches more value to instinct and emotion than to the established conventions of society. He has an innate love for music and very often he betrays it in his novels in the form of rhythmical devices. In person, he is a "slender man of middle height...A low forehead, a prominent hooked nose

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1. The Modern writer and His World, P. 56. (Rupa & Co. Calcutta —13).
2. In an Interview with Philip Toynbee (The Hindustan Times, Jan, 4, 1959).
3. Ibid.
4. The Asiatic Review, July, 1946, P. 271.

and pointed chin lend his face an almost bird-like aspect.[1]

As a writer, Forster is very careful and conscientious, cautious and slow, fastidious and urbane. He has something poetical as well as comical in him. That makes his novels rather complex, to be studied at different planes of reality. He makes use of symbolism to convey the complexities of his ideas. He is more concerned with the inner than the outer life of his characters. A novel, he believes, must tell a story ; put he is not satisfied with mere story-telling. It must also express some 'idea', some 'music' of the soul. Thus the kind of story he tells has both an inward and an outward development ; it works through symbols as well as extraneous details. There is a streak of mysticism in his work. He has given us not only social comedy but also a great philosophical, contemplative and symbolical novel such as *A Passage to India.*

1. Dilly Tante, A Book of Biographies, (New York, 1931), P. 130.

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A PASSAGE TO INDIA

STORY IN A NUT-SHELL

The city of Chandrapore was situated on the banks of the river Ganges. There was nothing extra-ordinary in the city, except for the Marabar Caves, which were about twenty miles off the city. On a rise above the town stood the Civil Station, and on the other side was situated the Civil Hospital. Dr. Aziz was an assistant surgeon in that hospital, under Major Callendar. He was a widower, having two sons and one daughter, who lived with his wife's mother. One day, Dr. Aziz went to dine with his friends, Hamidullah and Mahmoud Ali. They were discussing a serious problem—whether or not it was possible to be friends with an Englishman. It was possible in England, they thought, but not in India, because the Anglo-Indian atmosphere spoiled even the best of Englishmen in a year or two.

In the meantime, Dr. Aziz received a note from Major Callendar, who wished to see him (Aziz) at his bungalow. Aziz thought that the Civil Surgeon had called him just to show his powers and not because he actually needed him. Aziz left the Party, hired a tonga, and started for the Major's bungalow. To his great disgust, he found the Major out. His heart was full of disgust. His tonga was taken away by two other English ladies without his permission. Aziz left the place and

walked down the distance to a nearby mosque, to take some rest. An old English lady entered the mosque and startled Dr. Aziz. She was Mrs. Moore, the mother of the City Magistrate, Ronny Heaslop. She had come to India with Miss Quested, a young English girl who was expected to be engaged to Ronny for marriage. Mrs. Moore was happy to breathe the calm and quiet atmosphere of the mosque. Seeing the tank of a fresh water, she suddenly declared : "God is here." Dr. Aziz was impressed by her sympathetic behaviour, and soon a sort of intimacy developed between them.

The Collector of Chandrapore, Mr. Turton, arranged a party in honour of these two English ladies, and he invited some prominent Indians also. He explained to Miss Quested that the main object of the party was to bridge the gulf between East and West. But the party proved to be a failure. The English did not behave with their guests properly. Miss Quested felt this. She genuinely wished to see the real India and be friends with the Indians. The only Englishman who paid attention to the Indians guests, was Mr. Fielding, the Principal of the Government College, Chandrapore. Dr. Aziz did not attend the party, though he was also invited.

Dr. Aziz was, however, invited by Mr. Fielding at his house. The other guests were Mrs. Moore, Miss Adela Quested, and Professor Godbole. It was a lively party. During the course of his conversation, Dr. Aziz made a reference to the Marabar Caves. Miss Quested became eager to visit them. Aziz extended the invitation, which was thankfully accepted by the ladies. The day of the expedition was fixed. They travelled by train to the nearest railway station. The journey was extremely thrilling across the forested rocky areas. Miss Quested, particularly, was in her highest spirits. Dr. Aziz had made all the necessary arrangements for their convenience.

Mrs. Moore had a terrible experience in the first cave. She went mad for a moment. There was a terrible echo which produced the sound of 'boum', 'ou-boum', or

'bou-oum'. The echo demolished her sense of value and she lost all interest in life. She did not visit the second cave. Adela and Dr. Aziz and the guide made their expedition to the other caves. Miss Quested was buried in her own thoughts about love and marriage. Suddenly she asked Dr. Aziz how many wives he had. The question was simply shocking for the young doctor. In order to conceal his embarrassment, he moved ahead with rapid steps, leaving Adela behind, alone into one of the caves. After a short while he came out of the cave and found Adela missing. He saw her field-glasses lying at the entrance of a cave. He picked them up and found the leather strap broken. So he put them into his pocket. He saw a car rushing down the hill and he thought, perhaps, Miss Quested had joined her friends.

Next morning, Dr. Aziz was arrested on the charge of an assault on Miss Quested. This incident threw the whole city into a fever of racial feeling. Mr. Fielding pleaded on behalf of Dr. Aziz and tried to convince everyone that he was innocent. But nobody believed him. The circumstantial evidence was against Dr. Aziz. Everyone believed that Aziz followed Miss Quested into the cave and made insulting advances. She hit at him with her field-glasses ; he pulled at them and the strap broke, and that was how she got away. The strap was found in Aziz's pocket.

Fielding was, however, sure that Miss Quested was under some hideous delusion, otherwise she was so sincere and honest that she would be the last person in Chandrapore to accuse an Indian wrongfully. He wrote a letter to her, stating that Dr. Aziz was innocent. The day of trial came. The court was packed to suffocation. The Indians had engaged an eminent lawyer for defence. The case was in the court of Mr. Das, an assistant of Ronny Heaslop. The Europeans—Mr. and Mrs. Turton, Mr. and Mrs. Callendar, Mr. Heaslop etc.—took their seats on the raised platform near the magistrate. Aziz's council objected to their sitting over the dais. The magistrate asked them to climb down the platform and take their

seats on the floor of the hall with the rest of the public.

The proceedings of the case started. Miss Quested had been feeling unwell physically as well as mentally, since that happening in the caves. There was a terrible echo in her ears. She believed that only Mrs. Moore could cure her of this echo. But Mrs. Moore had sailed for England and died on shipboard. One of the counsels for Dr. Aziz asked the prosecution as to why Mrs. Moore, who had accompanied Miss Quested to the Marabar Caves, was not produced as a witness. The name of Mrs. Moore brought on another storm. Everybody shouted 'Mrs. Moore'. And outside the court, her name was Indianised into 'Esmiss Esmoor'. The sudden shouting of Mrs. Moore's name produced a healing effect on Adela's mind. Her echo was gone and she began to see things clearly. Seized with an attack of consciene, she withdrew the charge and Dr. Aziz was set free, Ronny broke the engagement. She lived for a few days at Mr. Fielding's, and then she sailed for England to look after the other children of Mrs. Moore, Ralph and Stella. Fielding also followed her. Aziz and his friends were under the impression that Fielding had gone to England with her to marry her. They were, however, mistaken. Fielding married no doubt, but the girl whom he married was not Miss Quested. She was Stella ; the daughter of the late Mrs. Moore. From England, Fielding, wrote one or two letters to Dr. Aziz, but Aziz's mind was so much filled with suspicion that he did not even open those letters.

After his marriage, Fielding returned to India, accompanied by his wife and Mrs. Moore's younger son, Ralph. He was on his official duty of inspecting schools in Central India. He came to Mau, a native state, some hundred of miles eastward of the Marabar Hills, Professor Godbole had become the Education Minister in that State, and Dr. Aziz was appointed personal physician of the Rajah. On the religious festival of Krishna Janmashtmi. Dr. Aziz happened to meet his old friend, Mr. Fielding. They had a last ride together. Their misunderstandings were

removed. They discussed their ifferences and tried to arrive at a common understanding. Whetheror not it was possible for them to develop a lasting friendship. Both wanted to become friends, but their circumstances did not allow them. There were the barriers of race, culture and national character. Hence, their conversation only ended in an argument, and nothing good came of it. East and West could not be united—the gulf between them remained as wide as ever.

3

A PASSAGE TO INDIA

A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

A Passage to India is the most ambitious, the mos perplexing, and probably the most widely circulatedt of E. M. Forster's novels. "It is at once the finest and[1] the most typical of his books, revealing most clearly his individual quality and distinction."[2] It is undoubtedly his masterpiece, and perhaps, "his last word as a novelist".[3] It has been studied and analysed by eminent critics as a social document, as "a classic of the liberal spirit," and as a "contemplative" novel opening out abundant possibilities of symbolic interpretation and psychological implications. And yet, to put it in the words of Peter Burra, its "thought, like music, cannot be fixed, not its meaning defined".[4] One can re-read a dozen times and be no nearer a solution".[5]

1. It has reached a wide audience in the Everyman. Modern Library, Pocket. and Penguin editions. It has also been dramatized and successfully produced in London.
2. Gertrude M. White, A Passage to India : Analysis and Revolution, PMLA, Sept. 1953. P. 653.
3. Dr. Johnstone, J. K., The Bloomsbury Group, P. 231.
4. Introduction to the Everyman edition of A Passage to India (London, 1942).
5. E. B. C. Jones, E. M. Forster and Virginia Woolf," The English Novelists, ed. Derek Verschoyle (London, 1936) P. 262.

Forster himself had a great deal of difficulty with this novel. He thought, he would never be able to finish it. He began it in 1912, immediately after his first visit to India, and published it in 1924, after his second visit to India, in 1921. When he made his second trip to India in 1921, he brought the novel with him and found that what he had written wasn't India at all. It was like sticking a photograph on a picture.[1] He couldn't work on it, when he was here. But when he got away, he could get on with it and he finished it in 1924. His friend Lowes Dickinson called this novel 'a classic on the strange and tragic fact of history and life called India'.

A Passage to India was, thus, a fruit of Forster's first-hand experience and observation of Indian life. It is his least imaginary work,[2] though it is most imaginative in conception and execution. With it Forster entered into a fuller recognition of his powers as a novelist. K. W. Gransden writes : "India caught Forster's imagination ; it made him fortune as a descriptive writer ; it took him out of himself and enabled him to transcend his limitations. It added the wine of life to the tea-cup of experience. It brought him face to face with religion, which finds little place in the early books".[3]

A Passage to India is a social and political document of great importance. It changed the trend of Anglo-Indian writing from hostility towards Indians to a sympathetic understanding and friendliness. K. W. Gransden observes : "It was the first intelligent and sympathetic book about India ever written by an Englishman. Of its few successors, only J. R. Acherley's *Hindoo Holiday* stands out ; Orwell's early novel *Burmese Days* seems crude and native in comparison."[4] It goes to Forster's credit that at a time when very few Englishmen wrote about India, he tried to give a sympathetic account of

1. Writers at Work : The Paris Review Interviews, P. 28.
2. E. M. Forster at Eighty, (Encounter, Jan. 1959) P. 81
3. See E. M. Forster's Indian Entries in Encounter, Jan. 1962. PP. 20—27.
4. E. M. Forster at Eighty, Encounter, Jan. 1959. P. 81.

some of the problems arising out of the British rule in India. Dr. Bhupal Singh calls this novel "an Oasis in the desert of Anglo-Indian fiction"[1] symbolical and mystifying novel. A deeper current of meaning runs through it from the beginning to the end. It has been woven into a complex pattern. That is why some critics have failed to apprehend its true significance. They find themselves at a loss to find out a dialectical pattern which may harmonize its social, psychological, and philosophical levels. Thus we find persons like Ranjee Shahane saying : "He beats the bush with admirable dexterity but nothing appears. No wonder his book leaves on our minds an impression of waste"[2] Similarly, Lionel Trilling says : "It is not easy to know what to make of the dominant Hinduism of the third section of the novel."[3] Some admirable studies have recently been made which have tried to expound the real symbolical significance of this novel. The most convincing analysis is presented by Glen O'Allen in his article *Structure Symbol and Theme in E.M. Forster's A passage to India*[4] This critic sees the threefold division of the book—Mosque, Caves and Temple as related respectively to the seasons of spring, summer, and the wet monsoon autumn of India ; and to man's emotional nature, his intellect, and his capacity for love. Relating the principal characters to these arbitrary divisions, Allen finds that Forster has equated Dr. Aziz with emotionality, Fielding and Adela Quested with intellect, and Professor Godbole with the capacity to love. The mysterious Mrs. Moore, with her impulse toward emotion and her involvement in things of the intellect, seems equally at home in mosques, caves or temples. The same critic finds further that the three-part division of the novel adumbrates three attitudes toward life : the path of activity, the path of knowledge, and the path of devotion. It is Forster's triumph, he shows, to weld these

1. A Survey of Anglo - Indian Fiction 1934 p. 221.
2. "Some British I Admire", Asiatic Review, XLII. (July 1945); p. 273.
3. E.M. Forster, A Study, 1944, p. 136.
4. PMLA, Dec. 1955, 934—954.

diverse paths together through delicate use of symbolic motifs so that they form a total satisfyng, if mystifying, pattern of life and art[1].

The centre of gravity in the novel is the description of the Marabar caves. The first part of the novel points forward to the Marabar adventure, and the latter half, by retrospective analysis, points back to it. What happens to Mrs. Moore in the Caves ? What had spoken to her that robbed infinity and eternity of their vastness, the only quality that accommodates them to mankind ? What dwelt in the first of the Caves ?—something very small. Before time it was before space also. What is the echo which undermines Mrs. Moore's hold on life and demolishes her sense of value ? What happens to Miss Quested ? Was she the victim of an hallucination, a complex, an unidentified intruder, or what ? These are some of the questions that remain unanswered. The value Forster attaches to what happens in the caves goes to prove that it cannot be dismissed as hallucination. Still the caves remain shrouded with a sense of mystery and they create on the reader's mind an overwhelming sensation of panic and emptiness. This overt vagueness, however, does not in any way disturb the story of the novel.

There is a strong streak of mysticism in the novel. Forster has carefully patterned it into perplexity. "He found India a brain-twister and the challenge and difficulty of understanding the real India symbolized for him the inevitability of human equipment to puzzle out the final truth.[2] He questioned—'Were there worlds beyond which *one* could never touch, or did all that is possible enter *one's* consciousness ?'[3] Perhaps, he could not get a satisfactory reply. 'Outside the arch there seemed always an arch, beyond the remotes echo a silence'.[4] He, therefore gave a

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1. This analysis of symbolism has been quoted from p. 121 of A Reader's Guide to Great Twentieth Century Novels by Karl and Magalaner.
2. Rao, B. Damodar: Mystery or Muddle, Literary Criterion Winter 1959, p. 29.
3. Italics ours. A Passage to India, p. 256, (Penguin Edition).
4. Ibid, p. 51—52.

mystic touch to his enlightened bafflement, and tried to communicate it to his readers, leaving them in a state of bewilderment and thinking whether what they felt was a vision or a nightmare, what they read was a mystery or a muddle.

Thus *A Passage to India* offers a teasing variety of interpretations[1]. "It is too great a work of art to render up any simple view of life. On the surface it presents the magnitude, mystery, and complexity of India, symbolically it presents the complex mystery of all life and is a study of the problem of evil in the universe. The reader should never, such is Forster's mystery, lose this two-fold vision as a simultaneous effect, and, if he is aware of the significance of such a reading of life as coming in 1924, he should equally feel that its vision is timeless."[2]

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1. To quote A. S. Collins.
2. Collins, A. S. : English Literature of the Twentieth Century p. 203.

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A Passage to India: Fact and Fiction

It is interesting to read *The Hill of Devi* and Forster's *Indian Entries*[1] in order to understand the relationship between his real experiences in India and his Indian novel. Some of the characters, places, and incidents of *A Passage to India* have their counterparts in reality. *The Hill of Devi,* being a factual record of Forster's visits to India, contains several incidents which bear close resemblance to their counterparts in *A Passage to India.* It contains the description of the Gokul Ashtami festival at Dewas which he attended in 1921. This descriptisn reappears in the last section of his novel with slight modifications. Again, in the first section of *The Hill of Devi,* Forster mentions the offer of the carriage to Dickinson which "however didn't arrive." This incident reminds us of the Bhattacharya's offer to Mrs. Moore in *A Passage to India.* The description of the courtscene, with the man who pulled the punkah, has its origin in reality :

> *March 25.* To court with Saeed, but he only signed documents. In the sub-judge's room more went on ; civil surgeon giving evidence in murder case Punkah boy, seated at end of table, had the impassivity of Atropos.[2]

Sometimes even longer incidents are taken over in the novel. Forster describes his adventure during a walk in *The Hill of Devi* .

There we had an exciting and typical adventure.

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1. Published in Encounter, Jan. 1962, pp. 20—27.
2. Indian Entries, Encounter, Jan. 1962; p. 25.

> Our train of villagers stopped and pointed to the opposite bank with cries of a snake. At last I saw it—a black thing reared up to the height of three feet and motionless. I said, "It looks like a small dead tree", and was told, "Oh no", and exact species and habits of snake were indicated —not a cobra but very fierce and revengeful, and if we shot it would pursue us several days later all the way to Dewas. We then took stones and threw them across the Sipra ... in order to make snake crawl away. Still he didn't move and when a stone hit his base still didn't move. He *was* a small dead tree. All the villagers shrieked with laughter.[1]

A corresponding incident occurs in *A Passage to India* during the ascent to the caves :

> Again, there was a confusion about a snake which was never cleared up. Miss Quested saw a thin, dark object reared on end at the farther side of a water-course, and said, "A snake!" The villagers agreed, and Aziz explained : yes, a black cobra, very venomous, who had reared himself up to watch the passing of the elephant. But when she looked through Ronny's field-glasses, she found it was not a snake, but the withered and twisted stump of a toddy-palm. So she said, "It is not a snake". The villagers contradicted her. She had put the word into their minds, and they refused to abandon it.[2]

In *The Hill of Devi*, Forster describes another episode which appears with a slight difference in *A Passage to India* also. He tells us that a couple told the Maharajah how they had been motoring from Dewas to Indore, and how their car had been hit by some animal just as they crossed the Sipra :

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1. The Hill of Devi, p. 63.
2. A Passge to India, Ch. 14.

His Highness sat up keenly interested. "The animal came from the left ?" he asked.

"Yes".

"It was a large animal ? larger than a pig but not as big as a buffalo ?"

"Yes, but how did you know ?"

"You couldn't be sure what animal it was ?"

"No, we couldn't".

He leant back again and said, "It is most unfortunate. Years ago I ran over a man there. It was not at all to blame—he was drunk and ran on to the road and I was cleared on the enquiry, and I gave money to his family. But ever since then he has been trying to kill me in the form you describe."[1]

A similar accident takes place when Adela and Ronny are out driving. They come back home and narrate the incident to Mrs. Moore, who shivers and says ; "A ghost !" Later we are told that the Nawab Bahadur had hit a drunken man there some years before, and the man had been waiting for him ever since.[2]

The description of the Caves, the lake in Mau, the lovely mosque at Chandrapur, the elephant ride, the guest house, the temple of Hanuman and the lovely Mohammedan shrine, are all mentioned in Forster's *Indian Entries*. His real achievement lies in transmuting these places and incidents into something rich and beautiful. These incidents and places are not put in simply for the purpose of local colour. Forster interweaves them into the whole pattern of his novel and makes them serve a subtle purpose J. B. Beer writes that "in relating the actual incident of the snake and the tree, Forster remarks how it typified the difficulty of establishing the rights of a case in India. When he comes to use it in his

1. The Hill of Devi, p. 89-90
2. A Passage to India, Ch. VIII.

novel, he brings this uncertainty to the fore so that it dominates the account. It thus helps to suggest Adela's sense of confusion during the expedition."[1] Mr. Beer further suggests that "a good deal of Forster's experience must have been used in producing the details which give the novel its deceptively casual appearance—its air that 'this is how things usually happen, one after another.'"[2]

In an interview Forster was asked: "Can you say anything about the process of turning a real person into a fictional one?" E. M. Forster replied: "A useful trick is to look back upon such a person with half-closed eyes, fully describing certain characteristics. I am left with about two-thirds of human being and can get to work. When all goes well, the original material soon disappears, and a character to the book and nowhere who belongs else emerges."[3]

What is true of characters is equally true of places and incidents. Forster looks upon real setting and incidents with half closed eyes and allows them to undergo a change while passing through his mental aperture. The result is that the characters, incidents and places that emerge belong only to his book and nowhere else.

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1. The Achievement of E. M. Forster, p. 141.
2. Ibid, p. 142.
3. Writers at work, The Paris Review Interviews, p. 31

5

A Passage to India : Theme, Motive and Significance

(A) SATIRE ON BRITISH IMPERIALISM

Peter Burra in his introduction to the Everyman edition of *A Passage to India* writes that it is 'a book which no student of Indian Question can disregard'.

A Passage to India was published in 1924, when India was groaning under the iron heels of British imperialism. The Indians were struggling for freedom under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The attitude of the British Government towards the new aspirants for freedom, was very hostile. Though England may have made its subject railroads run on time, it had not been able to establish significant relationship with its subject people. The British government rested on its policy of Divide and Rule. It had created a gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims. Such was the political condition of India at that time. Forster, a liberal humanist, could not see this inhuman treatment of the British officers towards the natives. His sense of justice revolted against the cruelty of the British rulers. He, therefore, raised his voice against the British imperialist rule in India in the form of his book *A Passage to India*.

A Passage to India deals with the Anglo-Indian world of the Turtons and the Burtons who represent the British government. Their attitude towards the Indians is simply disgusting. The English of Forster's Chandrapore are perhaps, the limits beyond which no Englishman can go. Even in the hot weather they keep the windows of their club closed lest the servants (Indians, of course) should see the 'Sahibs' and 'mem-sahibs' acting together. National Anthem is being played, reminding the Britishers that they

are exiles and have come to India with a definite purpose of ruling over the country. A lady who was a nurse in a native state before her marriage is shown proud of speaking ill of the natives. Mrs. Callendar thinks that it is a real kindness to let a native die. Collector Turton is full of disgust for the filthy natives. Ronny, the City Magistrate, is angry with his mother for having met an Indian Doctor. Mrs. Turton feels that she is superior to every Indian lady excepting one or two Maharanis Knowing only how to deal with the Indian servants, she does not know how to address the respectable Indians. The Britishers do not attend on their guests is obvious enough from the Bridge Party. That is the attitude of the Anglo-Indians towards the Indians. Forster condemns this attitude. His portraiture of Anglo-Indian life has called for bitter protests from the Anglo-Indians. But the fact remains that a certain moral-degradation had crept over the Englishmen who came to rule over this country.

The British imperialist attitude is best represented by Ronny Heaslop, who thinks that India isn't a drawing-room and the English are not here to show their pleasant behaviour. He gives vent to his feelings in the following words :

> "I am out here to work, mind, to hold this wretched country by force I'm, not a missionary or a Labour Member or a vague sentimental sympathetic literary man. I'm just a servant of the Government ......We're not pleasant in India, and we don't intend to be pleasant. We've something more important to do."

What is that 'something more important'? 'To hold this wretched country by force.' A typically imperialistic attitude! The only link that Ronny is conscious of with an Indian is the official one. As private individuals he always forgets them. This master-slave relationship is a necessary consequence of the snobbish mentality which imperialism develops.

At Chandrapore, the Turtons were treated like little

Gods. The Indians feared the 'Bara Sahib', Mr. Turton, like a formidable superhuman creature. Whenever he passed through the market, they stood up with awe and esteem, to salute him. Forster satirises this self-assumed and self-cultivated superiority of the British officials. In the court scene when all of them sit on the raised platform, the Magistrate orders them to climb down and, thus, they are humiliated before the Indians. Forster criticizes this self-complacent attitude of the British officials in India. They should not pose like gods, he seems to suggest, and through Mrs. Moore he expresses his liberal views :

> "The English are out here to be pleasant. Because India is part of the earth. And God has put us on the earth in order to be pleasant to each other ......God has put us on earth to love our neighbours and to show it, and he is omnipresent, even in India, to see how we are succeeding."

The only good Englishman in the novel is Mr. Fielding who believes that 'the world is a globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of good will plus culture and intelligence.' But Mr. Fielding's creed is ill-suited to Chandrapore. He is looked down upon by his compatriots as a Kucha. The only persons that are tolerated in the Anglo-Indian world are like Ronny Heaslop, about whom every one says : 'he's the type we want, he's one of us.'

"This is the result of the undeveloped heart. A *Passage to India* is not a radical novel ; its data were gathered in 1912 and 1922 before the full spate of Indian nationalism ; it is not concerned to show that the English should not be in India at all. Indeed, not until the end of the book is the question of the expulsion of the English mentioned, and the novel proceeds on an imperialistic premise–ironically, for it is not actually Forster's own–its chief point being that by reason of the undeveloped heart the English have thrown away the possibility of holding India. For want of a smile an Empire is to be lost.'[1] Thus, Mrs.

1. Trilling, Lionel ; E.M. Forster p. 129.

Moore feels that 'one touch of regret—not the canny substitute but the true regret—would have made him (Ronny) a different man, and the British Empire a different institution.'

Besides being an impartial verdict on the British rule in India, *A Passage to India* give us Forster's deep insight into the life and aspirations of Indians during the British Raj. It shows a humanist's sane evaluation of the Indian aspiration for freedom from the bondage of alien Imperialism. It shows how the Indians were gradually gathering under the banner of nationalism and struggling for national independence. Dr. Aziz represents the then-outlook of every Indian :

> "Down with the English anyhow. That's certain. Clear out, you fellows, double quick, I say. We may hate one another but we hate you most. If I don't make you go, Ahmed will, Karim will, if it's fifty five hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea."

And the Indians were thus, dreaming of a happy future when : India shall be a nation ! No foreigners of any sort ! Hindu and Moslim and Sikh and all shall be one ! Hurrah ! Hurrah for India ! Hurrah ! Hurrah !'

But *A Passage to India* is more than that, more than a sympathetic portrayal of the complicated Oriental reaction to the British rule in India. "With all his political awareness and liberal astuteness. Forster concerned with these manifestations of racial and national tension much less as political than as human problems. The crucial years from 1905 to the late Twenties—which included the trauma of the First World War—had if anything reinforced his convictions with respect to the importance of communication and communion among people of various lands, religions, and social backgrounds. The word "Passage" in his title is highly significant ; again the fictional attempt is to "connect", to find the key, the link between one way

of life and another. Nor will it be found in international conferences at the summit. What is needed is no less than the re-evaluation of the place of reason, of feeling, and of the super-rational in the individual psyche. In *A Passage to India*, Forster's intent is, therefore, to present not only western civilization in collision with eastern, imperial with colonial, the human heart in conflict with the machinary of Government class, and race, but also a mystical, highly symbolic view of life, death, and human relationship. That he does not succeed entirely is not surprising in view of the great expanse of his canvas."[1]

(B) PICTURE OF THE ORIENTAL MIND

Forster's knowledge of India was scanty. He visited the country twice in 1912 and in 1922. The result was *A Passage to India*. He did not stay long enough in this land to get a first hand knowledge of India and her people. After all, what sort of people had Forster met during his stay here ? The types of Dr. Aziz and Mr. Das—men in the Government service fawning for favours from their bosses. Forster's Indians are all weak and feeble. "Although all of them have charm, none of them has dignity : they touch our hearts but they never impress us. Once, at his vindication feast, Aziz is represented as "full of civilization .. complete, dignified, rather hard" and for the first time Fielding treats him "with diffidence," but this only serves to remind us how lacking in dignity Aziz usually is.[2] The question to ask is : where are her patriots and poets, her soldiers and statesmen and her self-respecting citizens ? We, therefore, cannot bring ourselves to agree with Lionel Trilling when he says that Forster has treated the Indians with sympathy and affectionate understanding. Most of the Indians provoked the feeling of amusement in the mind of E.M. Forster.

Forster, first laughs at the so-called hospitality of the

1. Karl and Magalaner : A Reader's Guide to Great Twentieth Century English Novels. pp. 120-21.
2. Trilling, Lionel, E.M. Forster p. 125,

Indians. At the Bridge Party, Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela Quested are invited by Mrs. Bhattacharya. Mr. Bhattacharya tells them that he would send a tonga on Thursday to fetch them. But that Thursday never comes. The ladies remain waiting. In order to conceal their disappointment, they simply say : 'It must be some point of Indian etiquette.' They tell Dr. Aziz : 'An Indian lady and gentleman were to send their carriage for us this morning at nine. It has never come. We waited and waited and waited ; we can't think what happened.' Dr. Aziz immediately remarks, 'Slack Hindus – they have no idea of society' But soon after when he extends a formal invitation to the ladies, and his invitation is accepted by them, he is at a loss what to do. He thinks of his own poor surroundings and tries to change the topic by mentioning the Marabar Caves, and inviting them to see those Caves. Ronny is clever enough to detect the insincerity in the tone of Dr. Aziz and, therefore, he tells Adela, 'No, but Aziz would make some similar muddle over the Caves. He meant nothing by the invitation. I could tell by his voice, it's just their way of being pleasant' And Aziz actually forgets about this caves business. By these two illustrations, E.M. Forster suggests that the Indians are generally formal in their behaviour. When they invite someone at their place, they actually do not mean it. That is 'just their way of being pleasant.'

Secondly, Forster says that Indians are superstitious by nature. They weave many fantastic stories about the death of Mrs. Moore. Some people worship her as a goddess. When Mr. Mc. Bryde visits the two reported tombs containing Esmiss Esmoor's remains, he finds there the signs of the beginning of a cult—earthenware saucers and so on. Similarly the mounds on the way to the Marabar Hills are regarded by the villagers as the breasts of the goddess Parvati. The Krishna Janmashtmi festival also reflects the superstitious nature of the Hindus. There is no sense in such type of fun and frolic, but every year the beaten track is followed. Forster describes the festival with an ironic smile. He forgets that this celebration has different levels of significance. It is not for nothing

that the Hindus celebrate every function with respect and devotion mingled with enthusiasm. It is by this means that religion has been a living force in the life of the common man and not an exclusive affair of one class.

Thirdly, Forster hints at the suspicious nature of the Indians. He says : 'Suspicion in the Oriental is a sort of malignant tumour, a mental malady, that makes him trust and mistrust at the same time, in a way the Westerner cannot comprehend. He illustrates this point through the character of Dr. Aziz who suspects his friend Fielding of having illicit relations with Miss Quested.

Fourthly, E. M. Forster says that the Indians do not believe in the sanctity of private correspondence. When Dr. Aziz goes to see Mr. Fielding at the Guest House, he finds two letters lying on the piano. He reads the letters without any hesitation, which, of course, he ought not to have done. Commenting on his behaviour, Forster says, "He was not ashamed to do this. The sanctity of private correspondence has never been ratified by the East."

Fifthly, Forster points out the various fissures in the Indian soil. The whole country is divided into different races, sects, and creeds. There is no Hindu-Muslim unity. There is no cultural unity. Even one religion is divided into various sects and creeds Thus writes Mr. Forster : 'The fissures in the Indian soil are infinite : Hinduism, so solid from a distance, is riven into sects and clans, which radiate and join, and change their names according to the aspect from which they are approached.'

And, lastly, Forster hints at the unpunctuality of the Indians. The Englishmen, he says, never miss trains. They are always punctual. But the Indians do not attach much importance to time. Thus Professor Godbole miscalculates the time taken in his prayer and misses the train. It is, however, a redeeming feature that the birth of Lord Krishna was observed exactly at midnight and it drew a left-

handed compliment from Mr Forster : 'In a land where all else was unpunctual, the hour of the Birth was chronometrically observed.'

Now the question arises whether it is a true depiction of an Indian's mind ? Whether Forster has been able to catch the spirit of our India ? Perhaps, not. He himself confesses his own limitations when he writes : "India is the country, fields, fields, then hills, jungle, hills, and more fields. How can the mind take hold of such a country ? Generations of invaders have tried, but they remain in exile .....She calls 'come' through her hundred mouth, through objects ridiculous and august. But come to what ? She has never defined. She is not a promise, only an appeal." India or any country for that matter does not give herself up so easily. Of all the nations of the world it is in India that religion seems to be so inextricably intertwined in the life of the people. How can a Foreigner be expected to have an insight into the Indians without the necessary background ? What a mess Forster makes of the Krishna Jayanti ! To Leavis the account of the Krishna ceremony is "a characteristic piece by the sensitive, sympathetic and whimsically ironic Mr. Forster" D. H. Lawrence thinks : "Forster doesn't understand his Hindu. And India is to him just negative : because he doesn't go down to the root to meet it."[1] To us, however, it is neither baffling nor is it a wonderful account. We celebrate the birthday of the Lord every year to keep ourselves perpetually aware of our moral obligations and the sense of duty. Of course, the celebration is marked by gaiety and there are different levels of significance as in a Shakespearean play and Mr. Forster has, to say the least, missed the real import of the entire celebration. What does Hindu religion mean to most Westerners ? It is nothing but multifarious marks on the foreheads of the Hindus and worshipping stocks and stones and not eating beef or drinking wine. And they feel so much superior to these savages. "Hinduism", said E.B. Havel, "is not a dogma or a creed but a working hypothesis of human conduct."

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1. Aldous Huxley : The Letter of D.H. Lawrence 1956 p. 614.

In the words of Dr. Radhakrishnan it is a "persistent search for truth on the basis of a continuously renewed experience. Hinduism is human thought about God in continuous evolution. It welcomes all new experiences and new expression of truth. Light is good in whatever lamp it may burn even as a rose in whatever garden it may blossom."

This spirit of worship is embodied in rituals and institutions To quote Dr Radhakrishnan again: "The religious life of the community must be given sensible and institutional expression Without it, worship seldom develops its full richness and power......It is by means of sacred objects and ceremonial acts that man's worship gets rooted in the concrete facts of life, and develops the power to change life itself. The temple ceremonial the different items of worship, pilgrimage, are the vehicles of unspoken convictions" Temples are the visibles symbols of Hindu religion and the observance of feasts is but a concrete expression of religion To miss the symbolic meaning of these concreate manifestations is to miss the inner core of religion. Therefore, instead of all this dwelling on the Hindu theme and religion, one would wish that E M. Forster had better left religion, to take care of itself or he had approached the Hindu religion and culture with a poetic sensibility as indeed it has been done by the transcendentalists of America and by Walt Whitman and T.S. Eliot.[1]

But unfortunately, Forster cannot besaid to have given us a convincing picture of India, her people and their customs and traditions. His is a superficial knowledge of this country. His only merit lies in the fact that at a time when very few Englishmen wrote about India, he tried to give a sympathetic account of some of the problems arising out of British rule in India. For that he deserves credit and just praise.

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1. Quoted from The Literary Criterion. Winter 1953.

(C) THE THEME OF SEPARATENESS

A Passage to India deals with the theme of separateness, or rather of "fission and fusion."[1] There is an attempt at desired union, at bridging the gulfs and removing barriers, but nothing fruitful comes of it. Here Forster has driven the tragic evil of human division to its most complex and baffling condition, without any signs of redemption or permanent harmonious resolution. Dr. Aziz and Mr. Fielding make desperate attempts to form a lasting friendship and arrive at a common understanding, but their efforts are thwarted and their final conversation ends in an argument. It appears that their "old scars have healed, but they can still throb with remembered pains and unsettled racial scores."[2] They cannot forget the words that divide them. They cannot unite in brotherhood and love, though they very much desire this unity. It is worthwhile to quote the finale of the novel in this connection. Aziz says to Fielding while riding against him :

...Yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then'—he rode against him furiously—'and then,' he concluded, half Kissing him, 'you and I shall be friends'.

'Why can't we be friends now ?' and the other, holding him affectionately. It's what I want. It's what you want.'

> But the horses didn't want it—they swerved apart; the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single file ; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, he carrion; the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau beneath : they did'nt want it they said in their hundred voices,

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1. Gertrude M. white, "A Passage to India" : Analysis and Revalcation, PMLA, Sept. M. 1953.
2. Zabel, Morton Dauwen : Craft and Character in Modern Fiction, p. 243.

"No, not yet," and the sky said, "No, not there."

This sense of separation haunts the whole novel. It is not only the Western civilization in collision with the eastern, or the imperial with the colonial, but the barriers and fences underly every human relationship. Thus, Hindus and Moslems cannot really approach each other. Not only that. Hinduism itself is divided. Forster says:

> "The fissures in the Indian soil are infinite: Hinduism, so solid from a distance, is riven into sects and clans which radiate and join and change their names according to the aspect from which they are appreached . ..."

And later, we are told that Aziz's picnic fails "because he had challanged the spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments."

Gertrude M. white makes a pertinent remark: "If the continent and its conquered inhabitants are not united, neither are the conquerers. The English, in their club from which all Indians are excluded, are divided among themselves by the same barriers."[1] There are *Kuchha* sahibs and *pucca* sahibs. The soldiers are different in their attitude from the civilians. The English civil station "shares nothing with the city except the overarching sky". The town itself is divided into two parts.

There is not only a separation among people of varying lands, religions, and social backgrounds, but also a separation of sex from sex, and even of man from himself. Thus, Adela and Ronny cannot meet in sexuality, and Mrs. Moore comments:

> "Why all this marriage, marriage......The human race would have become a single person centuries ago if marriage was any use."

or, again,

1. "A Passage to India"; Analysis and Revaluation; PMLA, Sept. 1953.

"She felt increasingly (vision or nightmare ?) that though people are important the relations between them are not, and that in particular too much fuss has been made over marriage, centuries of carnal embracement, yet man is no nearer to understanding man".

And thus, Fielding when he marries Mrs. Moore's daughter Stella, soon finds that his wife is after something else and so he must remain apart from her. After the trail, when Adela and Fielding meet in an idea, Forster comments : 'a friendliness, as of dwarfs shaking hands, was in the air". And Mrs. Moore is separated from her son, from all people, from God, from the universe, and even from herself.

"......and she realized that she did'nt want to write to her children, didn't want to communicate with anyone, not even with God......She lost all interest even in Aziz, and the affectionate and sincere words that she had spoken to him seemed no longer hers but the airs".

Thus, this sense of separateness is all-pervasive. It penetrates into the very structure of the novel, and assumes a huge dimension. Forster seems to be saying : "perhaps it is futile for man to initiate their own unity. they do but widen the gulfs between them by the attempt." *A Passage to India* is a novel of these gaps and gulfs. Its dominant idea is best expressed by the following lines of Whitmen's poem from which it takes its title :

Passage to India !

Lo, soul, see'st thou not God's purpose from the first ?

The earth to be spanned, connected by network,

The races, neighbours, to marrry and be given in marriage,

The oceans to be crossed, the distant brought near,

The lands to be welded together.

Then not your deeds only O voyagers. O scientists
and inventors, shall be justified,
And these hearts as of fretted children shall be
soothed,
All affection shall be fully responded to, the
secret shall be told,
All these separations and gaps shall be taken up
and hook'd and link'd together,
The whole earth, this cold, impassive, voiceless
earth, shall be completely justified,
Nature and Man shall be disjoined and diffused
no more,
The true son of God shall absolutely fuse them.[1]

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(D) SYMBOLISM

A Passage to India has a complex symbolic pattern. It is, in fact, a 'Passage to more than India ! It can be studied at two levels : the realistic and the philosophical. At the realistic level, it deals with the problem of Anglo-Indian relationships ; but at the deeper philosophical level it deals with the problems of "fission and fusion,"[2] of good and evil in the universe, of the antithesis "between Real and not-Real, true and false, being and not-being."[3] Many critics of Forster have dwelt upon the symbolic significance of *A Passage to India*. R. A. Brower points out that "the central design of Forster's novel is composed of a group of symbolic metaphors, and his irony is inherent in the meaning of his symbols.[4]

1. Leaves of Grass.
2. Gertrude M. White, A Passage to India : Analysis and Revaluation, PMLA, Sept. 1953, vol. 68, p. 644.
3. E. K. Brown, E. M. Forster and the Contemplative Novel, University of Toronto Quarterly III (April, 1934, p. 352).
4. The Twilight of The Double Vision ; 'A Passage to India' (The Fields of Light,) 1962; New York, p. 184.

Rex Warner remarks: "Forster's symbols do deserve study. It is they which make his writings poetical and which give to his later work its peculiar distinction."[1] J. B. Beer observes that "symbolic implications have transformed the pattern of the novel. What seemed at first sight to be only a conflict between British and Indians has broadened into a conflict between earth and sky—which in its turn veils the conflict between spirit and matter between love and the intractable."[2] Among other critics, Dr. J. K. Johnstone, Professor James Mc Conkey, and Glen O. Allen have studied at length the symbolic pattern of *A Passage to India*.

Dr. Johnstone feels that the novel, in accompaniment of Mrs. Moore's spiritual development moves steadily from Christian and Moslem to Hindu. The division of the novel into three parts—Mosque, Caves and Temple accords with the spiritual development of its underlying theme. It also represents, as Forster tells us in a note to the Everyman edition "the three seasons of the Cold Weather, the Hot Weather, and the Rains, which divide the Indian year" Mosque corresponds with the cold weather: Caves with the hot weather, and Temple with the rainy season. The novel starts with the peaceful seclusion of theism (represented by the seclusion of the mosque), and proceeds on to assert the undeniable reality of evil (the caves are supposed to be the source of evil), and finally it moves to the synthesis which Hindu pantheism achieves. The Hindu ceremony in the Temple (the last part of the book) opposes evil as the Rains drench out the terrible heat and drought of the Hot Weather. Whereas in the caves, love is denied and life is declared to be sterile; in the Temple, love is born and life confirmed. The Rains are the rains of mercy, love, and universal life. At the birth of Lord Krishna in the Temple, "All sorrow was annihilated, not only for Indians but for foreigners, birds, caves, railways, and the stars; became joy, all laughter; there had never been disease nor doubt,

1. E. M, Forster, (London, 1950). p. 18.
2. The Achievement of E. M. Forster, (London, 1962) p. 147.

misunderstanding, cruelty, fear." Forster comments: "By sacrificing good taste, this worship achieved what Christianity has shirked; the inclusion of merriment." Thus he seems to prefer the pantheistic religion of the Hindus to Islam and Christianity. At least, Hinduism has been able to solve the problem of the evil in the universe. The theme of Hinduism is carried into the novel by Mrs. Moore, and after her death by her son and daughter—Ralph and Stella. Mrs. Moore finds both Mohammedanism and Christianity inadequate "Both these religions exclude much of the universe from their purview. Neither accounts satisfactorily for evil nor makes due allowance for it. They are both helpless before the Marabar Caves; and Mrs. Moore discovers there that God is not omnipresent, though she was right to think. as we learn later, that He is love. Only Godbole, the old Hindu professor, who explains to Fielding that evil is present when God is absent and that both Good and Evil are aspects of God, understands the Caves from the first; and only Hinduism, a pantheistic religion which accepts everything in the universe, from modern machinery to the farthest stars, from good to evil, makes adequate allowance for the Marabar echo. Neither Christianity nor Mohammedanism can deal with it. Logic, law-courts, and reason are helpless before it; it is as useless to attempt to control it with this apparatus as to search in the dark with an electric torch for the tracks of a ghost. The echo is finally overcome by Mrs. Moore's influence, because she accepts and understands it, and is herself truly religious and good. This is the main theme of the novel, or rather, the outer garments of the main theme. It has an astonishing force (which, of course, cannot be appreciated when it is removed from its context) because it expresses Forster's deep intuition that the negation of love and personal relations, which for him is the essence of evil, cannot be overcome by reason alone, by Christianity, or by any religion that does not embrace the whole of life, but must be fought by the human spirit in co-operation with the life-giving forces of nature. Krishna, whose Festival, with the help

of Mrs. Moore's influence, brings about the final concord in the novel, is a god of agriculture who embodies the reproductive powers of nature. Held by a pantheistic religion to be Lord of the Universe, he is a greater personification of the forces which the Demeter of Cnidus and the Ephesian Artemis also represent. It is emphasised in the novel that Krishna is Love. And, as always in Forster's books, true religion is closely associated with the subconscious mind."[1]

Professor James McConkey[2] still probes deeper into the symbolic meaning of *A Passage to India.* He poses the question—what happens to Mrs. Moore in the cave? —and replies: "On the literal level, that voice is the echo which is produced following the striking of a match; on the metaphysical level, the voice is suggestive of the transcendent principle of the Marabar: before time and space, devoid of attributes, the empty absolute. Such a concept of the absolute is not foreign to the Hindu philosophical systems; in the metaphysics of the Vedanta, the doctrinal basis of all Hinduism, Brahman, the absolute reality, is without atributes, without distinctions. Nothing can be ascribed to it, nothing said of it: it is unknowable.

"As an echo, the voice cannot be the absolute; nor can Mrs. Moore, in hearing the echo, have achieved total identification with the absolute. There would be, one assumes, no echo at all, had total identification been made ......Although Mrs. Moore's vision in the cave is incomplete, the results produced upon her are similar to those produced at the moment of Nirvana when the individual soul (Atman) merges with pure being: to Mrs. Moore, as in the moment of Nirvana, the physical world loses its significance and all distinction, moral as well as physical, is obliterated. Thus the echo brings the destruction of all her values, meaning and importance no longer are to be found in friends, family, the grand-children to come, the supreme Lord with attributes. Distinctions themselves

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1. Dr. Johnstone, J. K.—The Bloomsbury Group, p. 261.
2. The Novels of E. M. Forster, pp. 137—39.

vanish ; the echo has murmured to her, 'Pathos, piety, courage—they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value.' If one had spoken vileness in that place, or quote lofty poetry, the comment would have been the same—ou—boum'." That Forster intends the emptiness of the cave to represent the absolute Brahman and the echo to represent Mrs. Moore's incomplete awareness of that absolute is suggested also by the parallel that exists between the "ou—boum," she hears and the divine symbol "OM" of the Vedas. This syllable is Brahman...... The Self, whose symbol is OM, is the omniscient Lord. He is not born. He does not die. He is neither cause nor effect. This Ancient One is unborn, imperishable, eternal."[1]

Professor McConkey continues that 'the caves in yet another way symbolize the world in which the characters —and mankind—live. Indeed, the whole universe as it is found in the novel is but one of the Marabar Caves. The circular form of a cave is also the arch of the Indian sky, upon which (as in the grouping of the caves within the hills) is found yet another arch. Where does it all end? The hollow boulder of the Kawa Dol tops all the hills and "mirrors its own darkness in every direction infinitely," Mrs. Moore, affected by the Indian sky, is aware that "outside the arch there seemed always an arch, beyond the remotest echo a silence." The concept of infinitude in time and space is acceptable only to the extent of one's intuitive power, Forster suggests. When intuition falters or fails, the reaches of time and pace—like the transcendent principle within the Marabar—become incomprehensible, empty of meaning : the human mind cannot grasp that which has no apprent beginning or end."[2]

Another convincing analysis of symbolism in *A Passage*

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1. For a further discussion of the parallel between "OM" and Forster's "Ou—boum", see Glen O. Allen's essay on A Passage to India (PMLA. Dec. 1955).

2, McConkey, James: The Novels of E. M. Forster, pp. 148—49.

to India has been presented by Glen O. Allen in his article "Structure, Symbol and Theme in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*."[1] This critic sees the three-fold division of the book—"Mosque", "Caves", and "Temple"—as related respectively to the seasons of spring, summer, and the wet monsoon autumn of India ; and to man's emotional nature, his intellect, and his capacity for love. Relating the principal characters to these arbitrary divisions, Allen finds that Forster has equated Dr. Aziz with emotionality, Fielding and Adela Quested with intellect, and Professor Godbole with the capacity to love. The mysterious Mrs. Moore, with her impulse towards emotion and her involvement in things of the intellect, seems equally at home in mosques, caves or temples. The same critic finds further that the three-part division of the novel adumbrates three attitudes toward life : the path of activity, the path of knowledge and the path of devotion. It is Froster's triumph, he shows, to weld these diverse paths together through delicate use of symbolic motifs so that they form a total satisfying, if mystifying, pattern of life and art.

In the specific context of the plot, Allen sees India as the formless mass, England and the West as rigid and definitely patterned. Thus, Adela and Mrs. Moore demand an idea of the world that will be reasoned and purposeful. But the Marabar caves show these women that intellectual response to life is not enough. The awful experience which Adela undergoes in the cave is not subject to the intellect which she brings to bear upon it. It cannot be "understood". The result is her wild accusation of Dr. Aziz, her attempt to manipulate the world that she comprehends when an alien world, beyond reason, reaches out at her in the darkness of the cave. Mrs. Moore, on the other hand, comes close to the condition of the sages. Living in the rarefied atmosphere of one who is detached from the world, she cannot any longer deal sensibly with the values which civilization imposes on those who have not escaped. She may have

1. PMLA, lxx (December 1955), 934—954.

gained much more, but she loses her practical concern for the things of this life and very naturally and suddenly drifts out of it on a ship westward bound.

The fusion of the three ways of life comes, as Allen sees it, in the water at Mau as all the boats collide, Fielding and Aziz, surrounded by the water of life and fertility, meet. East and West, emotion and intellect, find a common ground as the devotional ritual comes to a climax.[1]

Forster himself has thrown some hints to find out the symbolic meaning of *A Passage to India.* He writes in the "Author's Notes" to the Everyman edition. "The three sections—Mosque, Caves, Temple—represent the three seasons" of the Indian year. In an interview[2] he said : "......there must be something, some major object towards which one is to approach. When I began *A Passage to India* I know that something important happened in the Marabar Caves, and that it would have a central place in the novel... ..." Asked 'what was the exact function of the long description of the Hindu festival in *A Passage to India ?*, he replied : "It was architecturally necessary. I needed a lump, or a Hindu temple if you like—a mountain standing up. It is well placed ; and it gathers up some strings. But there ought to be more after it"[3] "Why", asks J.B. Beer, "when the climax of the book has been passed, should such lump be 'architecturally necessary' ? The answer can only be that it is therefor some purpose other than the dramatic demands of the plot. In other words, we have to cope with the possibility that the structure of the novel does not consist simply of an arrangement of events. Behind that structure there is another, an arrangement of the novel's

1. This analysis of symbolism has been adopted from A Reader's Guide to Great Twentieth Century English Novels. (pp. 121—22) by Frederick R. Karl and Marvin Magalaner.
2. Writers at Work, The Paris Rewiew Interviews p. 26
3. Ibid, p. 27.

meaning".[1]

What precisely that meaning is, nobody can tell with certainty. Perhaps Forster himself does not know. "…… ..in the twilight of the double vision, a spiritual muddledom is set up for which no high-sounding words can be found."[2]

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1. The Achievement of E.M. Forster, (London, 1962) p. 133.
2. A Passage to India, Chapter 23. p. 203 (Penguin Books)

6

A Passage to India: Craft, Character and Technique

(A) PLOT-CONSTRUCTION

Forster defines a story as a 'narrative of events arranged in their time sequence': and a plot as 'a narrative of events, the emphasis falling on causality. "The king died and then the queen died," is a story. "The king died, and then the queen died of grief" is a plot. The time-sequence is preserved, but the sense of causality over-shadows it.[1] He elaborates the point by saying: "Consider the death of the queen." If it is in a story we say 'and then?' If it is in a plot we ask 'why?' That is the fundamental difference between these two aspects of the novel."[2] A plot cannot be told to a gaping audience; it demands intelligence and memory. Mystery is essential to a plot, so that while reading one part of the mind must be left behind, brooding, while the other part goes marching on. The short story is an exposition; the novel is often and perhaps at its best an inquisition into the unknown depth of the novelist's mind. "Every action or word in a plot ought to count, it ought to be economical and spare; even when complicated it should be organic and free from dead matter."[3]

Forster himself is a clever story-teller, and his plots are contrived with inevitable skill. From the delicate, flickering pages of his novels sudden tragedies and events spring up upon the mind of the reader with the unheral-

1. Aspects of the Novel, p. 82 (Pocket Edition)
2. Ibid, p. 83.
3. Ibid, p. 84.

ded ferocity of a tiger. But these events are not without a bearing on the main plot and are never irrelevant to the main theme. They are at times symbolic and do more than merely weaving the plot. People are sometimes dropped in without warning, and yet we feel that we have been warned about them. His plots have been criticized by many critics, particularly for their odd contrivances and elusive tricks. The end in the novels of E.M. Forster is generally arbitrary and we do not feel quite convinced—the air of finality is always amiss. For Forster, the plot is an obstacle race which every character must undergo.

The plot-construction of *A Passage to India* is surer than that of any other of Forster's novels. "The novelist should", Forster thinks, "always settle when he starts what is going to happen, what his major event is to be. He may alter this event as he approaches it, indeed he probably will, indeed he probably had better, or the novel becomes tied up and tight. But the sense of a solid mass ahead, a mountain round or over or through which the story must somehow go, is most valuable and, for the novels I've tried to write, essential."[1] Forster, while he was writing *A Passage to India*, knew what was going to happen, what his major event was to be. Thus, he says ; "When I began *A Passage to India* I knew that something important happened in the Marabar Caves and that it would have a central place in the novel."[2] Leo Tolstoy thinks that, "the important thing in a work of art is that it should have a kind of focus ; i.e. there should be some place where all the rays meet or from which they issue. And the focus must not be able to be completely explained in words."[3] And truly does the ghastly Marabar scene become the focus of the story, and also the philosophic centre of the novel. The first part of the novel points

1. Writers at Work (The Paris Review Interviews) p. 26
2. Writers at Work (The Paris Review Interviews) p. 26
3. Talk with Tolstoy (1922). ed. A. B. Goldenveizer, transl S.S. Koteliansky and Virginia Woolf (1923).

forward to the Marabar adventure, and the latter half, by retrospective analysis and conjuctures, points back to it. The Marabar Caves become the centre of gravity and create sense of mystery in the mind of the reader. The plot moves on but the echo of these caves haunts the imagination, and a part of mind is left behind brooding over its mystery. Therein lies the greatest achievement of E.M. Forster.

Forster has divided the novel into there parts—Mosque, Caves, and Temple. After a description of the city of Chandrapore and a brief reference to the Marabar Hills, which contain the extraordinary caves the action of the novel begins, and swiftly moves on to bring almost all the major characters together at Mr. Fielding's tea-party. From this tea at the College springs all the subsequent action of the first two Parts of the novel. The bound of friendship is sealed between Aziz and Fielding ; the invitation to visit the Marabar Caves is extended by Dr. Aziz to Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela Quested. Part One, "Mosque," ends with the approach of the Hot Weather. Part Two, "Caves", describes the ancient Marabar Hills and the Caves they contain. The climax is reached when Miss Quested is attacked in one of the caves by some mysterious Indian and is persuaded to accuse Dr. Aziz of the crime. The whole town is torn by the trial and there is much tumult and agitation. And then comes the anti-climax, when, seized with an attack of conscience, Adela withdraws the charge and Dr. Aziz is set free. The main action of *A Passage to India* ends in this Second Part, "Caves." All the characters are dispersed. "Plot and story are virtually ended in Part Two ; but Part Three, "Temple", is nevertheless the necessary and organic conclusion of the novel."[1] Forster himself says that the long description of the Hindu festival in *A Passage to India* "was architecturally necessary. I needed a lump, or a Hindu temple if you like—a mountain standing up. It is well placed ; and it gathers up some

1: Dr. J. K: Johnstone : The Bloomsbury Group, p. 254

strings."[1] Thus, the three divisions of the novel, corresponding with the three divisions of the Indian year, as Forster suggests in a note to Everyman edition, compress its action and bring it to a complete and satisfying denouement.

Thus, *A Passage to India* has a masterfully built plot. It is almost miraculous on the part of E.M. Forster to have condensed the huge dimensions of its theme and drama to such concise terms. Forster shows a complete mastery of perspective. "If there is one gift more essential to a novelist than another", says Virginia Woolf [2] "it is the power of combination—the single vision. The success of the masterpieces seems to lie not so much in their freedom from faults—indeed we tolerate the grossest errors in them all—but in the immense persuasiveness of a mind which has completely mastered its perspective." Mr. Forster possesses such a mind and that makes *A Passage to India* a modern classic, both in conception and execution.

(B) CHARACTERISATION

(*i*) FLAT AND ROUND CHARACTERS

Forster has divided character into 'flat' and 'round'. "Flat characters", he says, 'were called 'humours' in the seventeenth century, and are sometimes called types, and sometimes caricatures. In their purest form, they are constructed round a single idea or quality : when there is more than one factor in them, we get the beginning of the curve towards their round. The really flat character can be expressed in one sentence such as 'I never will desert Mr. Micawber'. There is Mrs Micawber—she says she won't desert Mr. Micawber ; she doesn't, and there she is."[3]

Thus, the flat character, according to E.M. Forster,

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1. Writers at Work (The Paris Review Interviews), p, 27
2. The Novels of E,M. Forster (The Death of the Moth)
3. Aspects of the Novel, (Pocket Edition, p. 65),

is opposite to the character which tries to reproduce the whole man. The creation of the flat character is best studied not in fiction, but in drama, in Ben Jonson's theory of humours' and the best statement, as Robert Liddell suggests on the subject is that made by his most recent editors in the introduction to their monumental edition.

> 'He seizes character under one aspect, because he sees it so; neglecting, because he does not see them the cross-play of impulses the inconsistencies and conflicts, mingled strength and weakness, of which they are normally composed. His observation was prodigiously active and acute; but its energy was spent in accumulating observations of a single dominant trait, not in distinguishing fine shades."

This is an extremely acute analysis of the way in which the mind of a novelist works when he tries to create flat characters. Flat characters are indispensable for fiction. "Almost every successful comic character is 'flat'. For when a comic character begins to put on three dimensionality, to abandon his stock phrase, and to say something else—most of all when he appears tired of entertaining us, and seems to want our sympathy—we are generally displeased"[1] "We must admit", says Forster, "that flat people are not in themselves as big achievements as round ones, and also that they are best when they are comic. A serious or tragic flat character is apt to be a bore. Each time he enters crying "Revenge!" or "My heart bleeds for humanity!", or whatever his formula is, our hearts sink... It is only round people who are fit to perform tragically for any length of time and can move us to any feelings except humour and appropriateness."[2]

"One great advantage of flat characters", says Mr. Forster, "is that they are easily recognized whenever they come in". They are also helpful to the author. They never

1, Robert Liddell ; A Treatise on the Novel, p. 64,

2, Aspect of the Novel, p. 70.

need re-introducing ; they never run away ; they always provide their own atmosphere ; they have not to be watched for development. A second advantage is that they are easily remembered by the reader afterwards. They remain in his mind unchanged for the reason that they were not changed by circumstances. "We all want books", says Forster, "to endure, to be refuges, and their inhabitants to be always the same, and flat characters tend to justify themselves on this account."[1]

But, there are critics (who have their eyes fixed severely upon daily life) who have very little patience with the creation of flat characters. They argue that a flat character falsifies life. Every normal man is a mixture of complex element. He is generally a "compromise between Everyman in and Everyman out of his Humour. There are enough stable elements in his character for him to be seen as character, and yet he still retains the power to surprise us—if he is successful he will surprise us in such a way, that, though his action was unexpected, yet we do not think it improbable—it is rather a revelation to us that he could act in such a way."[2]

E.M. Forster, therefore, contends that 'a novel that is at all complex often requires flat people as well as round, and the outcome of their collisions' come nearer to life. Dickens' people are nearly all flat, and yet there is a wonderful feeling of human depth. Among the creators of round characters Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Proust deserve special mention. Some people in Jane Austen, some in Thackery, some in Fielding and some in Charlotte Bronte, also come in the category of round characters. 'The test of a round character', says Forster, 'is whether it is capable of surprising in a convincing way. If it never surprises, it is flat. If it does not convince, it is a flat pretending to be round.' Let us take Forster at his own words and examine the characters of *A Passage to India*.

The characters of *A Passage to India* may be divided

1, Ibid, p. 67

2, Robert Liddell : A Treatise on the Novel, p, 95,

into three groups—flat characters, round characters, and characters flat, but pretending to be round. Among the flat characters come Collector Turton, Major Callendar, Dr. Panna Lal, Hamidullah, Mahmoud Ali, the Nawab Bahadur and Professor Godbole. All of them are constructed round a single idea or quality. Collector Turton and Major Callendar are club-confined bureaucrats tied with one single red tape. Their loyalties are fixed. They are typical representatives of a governing class in a land of mere natives. Having fixed official morality, they show a somewhat hostile and indifferent attitude towards the Indians. They are the puccas, so to say. Dr. Panna Lal fawns on the English officials, whereas Hamidullah and Mahmoud Ali have a feeling of hatred for them. The Nawab Bahadur stands for his benevolent nature. He is a straightforward enemy and a staunch friend, and his hospitality is proverbial. 'Give, do not lend ; after death who will thank you?' is his favourite remark. He is a typical 'musahib' Professor Godbole has a knack for slipping away. When we first see him at Mr. Fielding's, his character is immediately fixed. He is a typical Indian Brahman, caught by the dextrous eye of E M. Forster.

The character of Mr. Fielding is also constructed round a single idea—that of liberal humanism. He believes in Forster's motto pre-fixed to *Howard's End*—'Only Connect'. His character is thoroughly convincing, though he is much too mature to undergo any change or transformation. He is quite capable of surprising his readers. His marriage with Stella comes to us as an unexpected surprise although it is not improbable. Thus, from Forsterian standards, he is a flat character, although there is life even in his flatness. He comes close to Forster himself.

Among the round characters come Dr. Aziz, Mrs. Moore, and Miss Adela Quested. The character of Dr. Aziz is three-dimensional, and we can see him from different angles. He comes before us as a doctor, as a poet, as a nationalist, as a sex-obsessed individual, and as a human being torn and tossed by his emotional and sentimental nature. His behaviour is quite surprising. He has tried

desperately to anglicize himself and to gain acceptance into British society. Failing he has become outwardly scornful and inwardly resentful towards the whites. But even then, he cherishes a warm love for Mrs. Moore and Mr. Fielding. It has been suggested that the name of Dr. Aziz 'runs the gamut from "A" to "Z", as if Forster intended that he should encompass essentially all humanity.'[1]

Mrs. Moore also changes for better or for worse. From the Christian point of view her character deteriorates; from the Indian point of view she come nearer to the attainment of Nirvana. When she comes to India, she is a Christian, believing in God. But as the book proceeds, she somehow becomes invested with almost suspernatural qualities of wisdom. Her sympathy with a wasp, binds her in a mystical way with the Hindu professor Godbole. Her assumed sympathy with Aziz makes her in the end into a kind of goddess, acclaimed as Esmiss Esmoor. Her terrible experience in a Marabar Cave undermines her hold on life and she sinks into a state of apathy. Forster has shown us the inner, spiritual development of Mrs. Moore; he has little interest in her outward semblance. The same is the case with Miss Adela Quested. Her character is round and convincing. Forster has drawn her from within. He has revealed to us, step by step, the gradual change that comes over Miss Quested after her accusation of Dr. Aziz, and we feel surprised when she suddenly, seized with an attack of conscience and under the benign influence of Mrs. Moore's name, withdraws her charge.

The character of Ronny Heaslop is to be placed in the third category. His is obviously a flat character pretending to be round. He is a 'pucca' sahib in the making, Like Mr. Turton and major Callendar, his loyalties are also fixed. He's the type we want. He's one of us'— cry his compatriots. The only relation he is aware of

1. Karl and Magalaner : A Reader's Guide to Great Twentieth Century Novels, p. 122.

with the natives is an official one. But now and then we find in his heart a feeling of remorse. He wants to change, but he finds himself quite helpless in the grip of environment. He feels sorry for Adela, for his mother, but soon the official in him gains the upper hand, and he forgets the pangs that prick his conscience.

It should, however, be remembered that the most scientific thing about Art is that we cannot yet be scientific about it, and that all that is said in the metaphysic of art is never mathematically said. In this branch of knowledge, there can't be any water-tight compartments. Life is much more complex than that and it can never be expressed through rigid *alphas* and *betas* of mathematics. In art, much depends upon taste. A character that appears 'flat' to one man, may seem to be 'round' to another. No sharp lines can be drawn dividing the *round* from the *flat*. Personal interpretations will always find their way in these matters.

(ii) INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS

(a) Mrs. Moore

Mrs. Moore is the strongest, the most philosophical, and one of the most significant characters in *A Passage to India*. She represents the mystic vision of E. M. Forster. With her, Forster had to face a difficult task. 'If he worried about the improbable, he would hardly have created the Ruth Wilcox—Mrs. Moore type of character. Psychic goddesses in touch with heavenly bodies as well as with the human soul are disturbing creations. Out of West comes Mrs. Moore to touch India with the strength of her mystic charm.'[1] She is a Christian, believing in God, when she arrives in India, but after her experience in one of the Marabar Caves, she accepts a total negation. Lionel Trilling argues that it is the improbable in life to which Forster is pointing; but to us, Indians, such mystic characters are the least alarming.

1. Karl and Magalaner: A Reader's Guide to Great 20th Century Novels, p. 123.

Mrs. Moore is a religious lady. She believes in God. When we are introduced to her for the first time in the mosque, we hear his saying to Dr. Aziz, 'God is here'. She does not like the dull atmosphere of the English Club. She finds solace in the mosque and the moonlight. When she watches the moon and the stars, a sudden sense of unity, of kinship with the heavenly bodies, passes into her. She believes that the spirit of God is running through every object of the universe. She, therefore, binds herself with a wasp, with all human beings, including the Indians. She asks her son, Ronny, to be pleasant to the Indians 'because India is a part of the earth. And God has put us on the earth in order to be pleasant to each other. God ... is... love.' She further tells him: 'God has put us on earth to love our neighbours and to show it, and He is omnipresent, even in India, to see how we are succeeding.'

Having a firm faith in God, Mrs. Moore believes that love for God implies love for humanity. She tells her son that the desire to behave pleasantly to others satisfies God—'The sincere if impotent desire wins His blessing.' Therefore, one should show good will and more good will and more good will. Ronny thinks that this religious strain in his mother is an indication of her bad health. But Mrs. Moore finds it difficult to avoid the name of God in her talks. He had been constantly in her thoughts ever since she entered India. She must needs pronounce. His name frequently, as the greatest she knew, the Omniscient and the Omnipotent. She is always troubled by the vastness of the universe and by the divine presence of God. 'Outside the arch there seemed always an arch, beyond the remotest echo a silence.'

Mrs. Moore has a mystic vision. As the book proceeds, she becomes invested with almost supernatural qualities of wisdom. She begins to feel a sense of futility of all social institutions. She find no sense in marriage. When she is sitting in the train, on her way to the Marabar Caves, she feels increasingly '(vision or night-

mare ?) that though people are important the relations between them are not, and that in particular too much fuss has been made over marriage, centuries of carnal embracement, yet man is no nearer to understanding men.' And when she visits the first cave, she has a terrible experience. She hears an echo amounting to 'boum' or 'bou-oum' or 'ou-boum'. On the literal level, the echo is produced following the striking of a match ; on the metaphysical level the voice is suggestive of the transcendental principle of the Marabar : the Empty Absolute, devoid of all attributes. Such a concept of the Absolute is not foreign to the Hindu philosophical systems. In Vedanta, the doctrinal basis of all Hinduism, Brahman, the absolute reality, is without attributes, without distinctions. Nothing can be ascribed to it ; nothing said of it ; it is unknowable. Mrs. Moore seems to believe in this philosophy. She has been, therefore, called a true Oriental. After this experience in the cave, Mrs. Moore becomes apathetic in her attitude towards the world and its people. She was a Christian when she came to India, but now she realizes that even religion can serve no pupose. Much has been talked about Christianity, but what is the use of all these empty talks ? She realizes that all its divine words from 'Let there be Light' to 'It is finished' only amounted to 'boum'. "And from this moment on," says Rex Warner. "Mrs. Moore, by all rational standards, deteriorates rapidly. She becomes cross and irritable ; she will do nothing to help the innocent Aziz or the hysterical Adela. Her indifference is not saintly, yet, after her death, she lives, as did Mrs. Wilcox as a pervading influence on the minds and characters of others.

"From the outlook of liberal rationalism it may seem impossible to justify this strange figure—a wise woman without any evident wisdom, a Christian lapsed into emptiness, a kind of Manga Mater the echo of whose drum is not ecstatic, though she seems to exact from her worshippers a willing or reluctant emasculation. It is a process that we have seen in the cases of Margaret Schlegel and

Mr. Wilcox. It is a process we have seen in the relations of Rochester and Jane Eyre.

On the other hand it may be said that Mrs. Moore is a link between Christianity and the atmosphere of barely understood Hinduism with which the book ends. She is a sacred memory both to the Moslem, Aziz, and to Godbole, the Hindu. Her children, one of whom marries Fielding, the only 'good' Englishman, are interested in Hinduism."[1] Hence, Lionel Trilling remarks that the plot of *A Passage to India* deals almost entirely with the Moslems, Dr. Aziz and his friends, but the story is suffused with Hinduism, and it is Mrs. Moore who carries the Hindu theme; it is Mrs. Moore, indeed, who is the story."[2]

Mrs. Moore actually gets a vision of the vast expanse beyond this universe. But her intellect fails to apprehend this vision. She shudders at its vastness. "The vastness, so troubling to Fielding, is something which Mrs. Moore, of course, has always accepted ; she is aware of the huge expanse beyond the phenomenal world and of a divine unity encompassing that expanse. Yet the effect made upon her within the cave is quite the reverse of that made upon Fielding as he views the hills from Chandrapore : for her, indeed, "the Marabar .....robbed infinity and eternity of their vastness, the only quality that accommodates them to mankind". The reason the Marabar produces dissimilar effects upon Fielding and Mrs. Moore is related to the difference in their intuitive powers. For certainly hers is much greater than his and is not so extensively limited as is his by the reasoning faculty. If momentarily the Marabar has caused Fielding to sense a greater reality which threatens his conception of the phenomenal world as the only reality, it has caused Mrs. Moore to become aware, if but inadequately, of a transcendent principle which goes far beyond the divine reality which she has always perceived—so far beyond, in fact, that her whole scheme of values based upon that divine reality is

1, Rex Warner : E.M, Forster, pp. 26-27.
2. E.M. Forster, p. 131.

demolished."[1] Henceforward, she cannot rest at peace.

Although her vision in the cave is incomplete, the results produced upon her are similar to those produced at the moment of Nirvana when the individual soul (*Atman*) merges with the pure being (*Brahman*). To Mrs. Moore, as in the moment of *Nirvana*, the physical world loses its significance and all distinctions, moral as well as physical, are finished. The echo brings the destruction of all her values : meaning and importance no longer are to be found in friends, family, the grandchildren to come and even God, the supreme Lord with attributes. She therefore, says :

> 'Oh, why Can't I walk away and be gone ? Why Can't I finish my duties and be gone ? Why do get headaches and puff when I walk ? And all the time this to do and that to do and this to do in your way and that to do in her way, and every thing sympathy and confusion and bearing one another's burdens. Why can't this be done and that be done in my way and they be done and I at peace ? Why has anything to be done, I cannot see. Why all this marriage, marriage ?.........The human race would have become a single person centuries ago if marriage was any use. And all this rubbish about love, love in a church, love in a cave, as if there is the least difference, and I held up from my business over such trifles.'

Mrs. Moore exercises a great influence over the other characters of the novel. Dr. Aziz becomes her devoted slave and is ready to lay down his own life for her sake. Even after her death he continues to cherish her memory. It is under the influence of Mrs. Moore's name that he does not charge the compensation from Miss Quested. Miss Quested has also a deep and real regard for Mrs. Moore. She firmly believes that only Mrs. Moore can help her in

1. James McConkey : The Novels of E.M. Forster. pp. 135-36.

curing the terrible echo. In the court when the proceed ings of the case are going on, she suddenly hears the name of Mrs. Moore and her echo is gone. Under the influence of that name she declares that Aziz is not guilty. Fielding is also connected with Mrs. Moore, as he marries her daughter, Stella, who is always after something. And that old Professor Godbole is linked with her in a mystical way through a little wasp. Her assumed sympathy with Dr. Aziz makes her in the end into a kind of goddess, acclaimed as Esmiss Esmoor by a crowd in the streets during the trial of Dr. Aziz. She, in a way, possesses a sort of immortality and her spirit echoes throughout the book.

The character of Mrs. Moore has a deep symbolic significance. If Dr Aziz stands for emotionality ; Fielding and Adela for intellect ; and Professor Godbole for love and devotion ; Mrs Moore seeks to combine all the three attitudes towards life. "With her impulse towards emotion and her involvements in things of the intellect, she seems equally at home in the mosque, the cave, or the temple. Symbolically, she seeks to represent the problem of conciliation and harmony among these three different ways of life. It is Forster's triumph that he sought "to weld these diverse paths together through delicate use of symbolic motifs so that they form a total satisfying, if mystifying pattern of life and art." (Glen'O Allen).

(b) Dr. Aziz

The character of Dr. Aziz is peculiarly fascinating. He is a Muslim physician who tried desperately to anglicize himself and to get acceptance into British society but failing he has become outwardly scornful and inwardly resentful towards the whites. Being sensitive and sentimental, he is tossed and turned by every random gust of emotions. He has a child-like inconsistency. "Although eager to measure up to English standards of puritan rectitude, Aziz lives closer to the literal facts of his emotions ; for good or bad, he is more human. He, like his friends, is not prompt, not efficient, not neat, not really convinced of

Western ideas even in science. And he, like them, is aware of his faults. He is hyper-sensitive, imagining slights even when there are none because there have actually been so many ; he is full of humility and full of contempt and desperately wants to be liked. He is not heroic but his heroes are the great chivalrous emperors, Babur and Alamgir."[1] Of late, he has been touched by the feelings of a rising nationalism in India, but on the whole he is never able to repudiate his emotional contradictions.

Dr. Aziz is a typical Muslim. He has an overwhelming love for the mosque. Though not religious, his sense of beauty awakes at the sight of the mosque and reminds him of the glory of Islam of which he is greatly proud. He takes great delight in the recollection of the Moghul Empire, and wants to bring back monarchy in India. In generosity and hospitality he compares himself with Babur; in matters of state his ideal is Aurangzebe. Commenting on his entirely Muslim ideas, E.M. Forster writes :

"A mosque by winning his approval let loose his imagination. The temple of another creed, Hindu, Christian, or Greek, would have bored him and failed to awaken his sense of beauty. Here was Islam, his own country, more than a Faith more than a battle-cry, more, much more...... Islam an attitude towards life both exquisite and durable, where his body and his thoughts found their home."

Dr. Aziz is man of emotional nature, susceptible to waves of nostalgia. He never applies reason and logic even in his personal relationship. He is always carried away by the most irrational sequences of emotions and sentiments. The estrangement between him and Mr. Fielding can fairly be attributed to this defect in Aziz's character. Being suspicious and sentimental, he fails to appreciate the heroism of Miss Adela Quested. Again, it is his emotional nature that makes him a willing captive of Mrs. Moore, and he becomes ready to lay down his life for her. His emotional nature is also reflected in his love for poetry. He himself is a poet and at times he delights

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1. Lionel Trilling : E.M. Forster, p. 131.

his readers with verses from the famous Urdu poets, Hafiz, Hali, Ghalib and Iqbal. The poetry of Ghalib transports him to a world of romance and beauty, where eternal joys bloom like flowers, where moon never wanes and where the waterfalls shoot from the eternal fountains. The subjects of his own poems are the decay of Islam and the brevity of love. He writes poetry in a conventional style. With a stroke of his pen he can generate roses and nightingales. His poetry is full of pathos and satire, but it is not natured by personal experience. It does not come from the depths of his heart. Later on he decides to write poetry for the masses. He believes that the songs of the future must transcend Caste or Creed. It should be at the lips of all. But he is never able to write such type of poetry.'

Dr. Aziz is a widower having three children—two sons and one daughter. Though a Muslim, yet he did not marry. When Miss Quested asked him the question how many wives he had he was greatly shocked and in order to hide his embarrassment he plunged into a cave. This question had challenged a new conviction of his community. He thought it improper to ask an educated Indian Muslim how many wives he had. Dr. Aziz emotionally cherishes the memory of his dead wife. He did not love his wife at a time when he should have loved her, but later on his affection for her grew deeper and deeper and he always felt proud of her. Touched by Fielding's kindness he shows him his dead wife's portrait, speaking with emotion : "I showed to you because I have nothing else to show." For his children also, he has a deep and wide affection. While walking in the Marabar Cave Miss Quested asks him "And are they (his children) a great pleasure to you !", Aziz replies at once, "Why ! naturally I adore them." Though the lips of Miss Quested Forster throws a good deal of light on this aspect of Aziz's character. "What a handsome little Oriental he was, and no doubt his wife and children were beautiful too, for people usually get what they already possess. She did not admire him with any personal warmth, for there was nothing of the vagrant in her blood ; but she guessed he might attract women of his own race and rank."

One aspect of Aziz's character is somewhat over-emphasized, namely his obsession with sex. Whenever he was in a vacant mood, he used to think of beautiful women. He wanted to spend his evenings with beautiful girls in singing and dancing and ultimately culminating in voluptuousness. He believed that there was no harm in deceiving society as long as she could not find you out. He had no moral scruples, he could do anything behind the curtain. It was here that he chiefly differed from an Englishman His conventions were social. He speaks of Miss Quested as a lady having practically no breasts and he asks Fielding to arrange for him a lady with breasts like mangoes, without being conscious of his obviously bad taste and lack of courtesy. Fielding is worried at his friend's sexual snobbery—leading, as it were, to derive sensuality the sort that classes a mistress among motor cars if she is beautiful and among housewives, if she is ugly.

The finest attribute of Aziz's character is his vigorous zeal to drive Englishmen out of India. He had a firm conviction that the days of the English rule had ended in this country and therefore it was proper for the English people to quit India honourably. He felt sure that if in his life time the English people did not leave India, the next generation would kick them out with force. He cries aloud : "Down with the English anyhow, that's certain clear out, you fellows, double quick, I say. If I don't make you go, Ahmed will, Karim will, if it's fifty five hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive away, every blasted Englishman into the sea." Aziz was also sure that after the departure of the English from India the Hindu and the Muslims would settle their disputes through a conference of oriental statesmen. He therefore shouts 'India shall be nation ! No foreigners of any sort ! Hindu and Moslem and Sikh and all shall be one ! Hurrah ! Hurrah for India ! Hurrah ! Hurrah !"

Although Dr. Aziz hates Englishmen for their imperialistic airs and crafty diplomacy and believes that so

long the English remain master and the Indians slave there can be no real friendship, between an Indian and an Englishman yet he has the deepest love and sincerest regards for Mr. Fielding and Mrs. Moore respectively. He regards Fielding as the only good Englishman and Mrs. Moore a true Oriental. Both have extended unbounded sympathy to Dr. Aziz. These two had strange and beautiful effects on him—they were his friends his for ever, and he their's for ever. He loved them deeply from the core of his heart. He loved them even better than Hamidullah because he had to conquer many difficulties in meeting them. It is under the influence of Mrs Moore's name that he lets Miss Quested off the costs incurred upon him in the Marabar Cave. He shows his deep love for the children of Mrs. Moore. Although Mrs. Moore is dead, Aziz continues to cherish her memory throughout his life.

"Though Aziz may represent the irrational, emotional element in colonial peoples, he is at the same time a real person in his own right ; with all the inconsistencies and contradictions which life implies...Though he is a scientist, a doctor, "his life [is]... largely a dream." He reverences a photograph of his dead wife more than any living thing. In a moment of good hearted posturing, he can declare that "all men are brothers," but for an imagined slight he shuns Fielding, the one Englishman who has tried to be worthy of his brotherhood. Aziz may be a weak human being, but he is at the same time a strong character. Though unpredictable, he is extremely probable. His name runs the gamut from "A" to "Z", as if Forster intended that he should encompass essentially all humanity."[1]

(c) Mr. Fielding

Mr. Fielding is the only good Englishman in the novel, as Dr. Aziz calls him. He is the Principal of the

1. Karl and Magalaner, A Reader's Guide to Great Twentieth Century English Novels, p. 122

Government College at Chandrapore. He is different from the other Anglo-Indian in so far as he does not look down upon the natives. He is called a 'Kuchha Sahib' from the Anglo-Indian view-point. He is made the butt of all sneers from Anglo-Indian quarters, simply because he shows a warm and sympathetic behaviour towards the Indians. He is too much of an individual and, therefore, he respects other individuals. He believes in the dignity of man as man, without any consideration of caste, colour, or creed. It is said that he represents Forster's own outlook on life.

Like E. M. Forster, Fielding is liberal in his outlook. He has no sense of racial superiority. He treats the Indians on equal footing. He believes that they are also human beings and as such they deserve a humane treatment. He is cultured and refined. He is rational in his thinking and as such he stands in sharp contrast to Dr. Aziz. Fielding is a true humanist. He thinks that the spirit of the individual is important above everything else. He thinks that the human mind is free to choose its place of rest and explore all possibilities of its growth. His humanism results in individualism. He believes in the sanctity of personal relationship. He loves Dr. Aziz and helps him throughout, much against the wish of his own community. He is the only Englishman who stands by him through thick and thin. He writes to Miss Quested that Aziz is not guilty. He invites the anger of the Turtons and the Burtons, but he never falters from the path of friendships. He help. Miss Quested when she is deserted by all, even by Ronny. He gives her protection in his College and persuades Dr. Aziz to let her off the costs incurred in the cave Dr. Aziz misunderstands his character, but in doing so Fielding has no axe to grind. He is simply helping an individual, a human being like himself. That increases his respect in our eyes.

Fielding is an enlightened man. He has belief in education. He does not mind whom he teaches. Public school boys, mental defectives, and policemen, all come

his way, and he has no objection to adding Indians. He has a great influence over his pupils. He has inspired in them a true sense of respect and dignity. As a teacher he is an unqualified success. His countrymen think that he is unpatriotic. Why should he treat the natives on equal footing? That widens the gulf between him and his countrymen. It is due to his scholastic career that he is, later on appointed by the Government to watch the progress of the British education in India.

Fielding has a great love for the Indians. He thinks that the true spirit of India resides in its people. Other foreigners come, they meet one or two persons, visit some important places, and feel that they have seen India, but Fielding believes that real India can be seen only by rubbing shoulders with the Indians. He, therefore, talks with them, eats with them, plays pranks with them, participates in their festival, visits places, and tries to become one with them. He at once becomes friendly with Dr. Aziz. He ignores all his shortcomings. He knows Aziz's weakness for sex, but he never mentions it. He takes an active part in Aziz's trial and tries to defend him at every step. He resigns from the British club, where his countrymen talk ill of the Indians. He makes all efforts to bring the East and the West closer to each other, but ultimately he fails in his efforts. The fault is not his : the fault is that of the different cultural and social backgrounds that the two countries have. He forgives Aziz for all his misunderstandings. He loves Professor Godbole and tolerates his talks to boredom. He hears with great patience when his Indian friends condemn his race and the British Government. Sometimes, he feels irritated at their talks, but he never loses self control or his temper. He is always sane in his views. His love for the Indians never falters.

Fielding is a man of forty. He has a varied experience of life. He has seen many ups and downs of life. He is not in favour of marriage, because he thinks, that marriage increases man's responsibilities. He believes in travelling light. He calls himself a holy man minus holi-

ness. He wants to leave behind him a thought rather than a child. He has experienced love also and has tasted its joys and sorrows. He was engaged to be married, but the lady broke off the engagement. For sometime he remained absorbed in the memories of his beloved and kept away from other women. But the lapse of time made him indulge very frequently in sexual affairs. Extreme indulgence in women brought repentence and, then, equilibrium. Now, after forty years' experience, he had learnt how to manage his life and make the best of it on advanced European lines. He had developed his personality. He was progressive in his outlook. He had known his limitations. He had controlled his passions. He was not the slave of his desires. He could no longer be swayed away by the gusts of random emotions. It was really a creditable achievement. He had become a hard-bitten, good-tempered, intelligent fellow.' He believed that the world was a globe of men who were trying to reach one another and could best do so by the help of good will plus culture and intelligence. He had been brought up in a different atmosphere. He was not the product of a public school where herd-instincts develop. He said : 'I believe in teaching people to be individuals, and to understand other individuals. It's the only thing I do believe in.' So far as the personal beliefs of Fielding were concerned he was an atheist. He did not believe in God ; his only god was reason. Later on, he marries Stella, the daughter of Mrs. Moore. She, like her mother, is a lady of religious beliefs. Fielding is unable to share her ideas. He thinks, she is after something. He feels that his wife does not love him as much as he loves her. But even then 'in the language of theology, their union had been blessed.'

Does Fielding represent E.M. Forster ? That is the question. Yes he does so to a great extent. His liberal humanism, his rationalism, his belief in the sanctity of personal relationships, his individualism, his refinement and culture, his desire to understand the Indian problems, and his ultimate wish to bring East and West together—

all link him with his creator. He makes desperate attempts to make friendship with the Indians, but ultimately he fails. He unofficially gives party to Mrs. Moore and Miss Quested and invites the Indians also—Dr. Aziz and Professor Godbole, but he does not succeed in his mission. And ultimately towards the end of the novel he asks Dr. Aziz : 'Why can't we be friends now? It's what I want. It's what you want.' But he soon realizes that the horses didn't want it : the earth didn't want it, and the sky didn't want it. He, therefore, fails to disprove Rudyard Kipling's famous saying ; 'East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.'

(d) Miss Adela Quested.

Miss Adela Quested is the heroine of *A Passage to India*. She has come to India along with Mrs. Moore in order to see the man whom she is expected to marry. The man is Ronny Heaslop, Mrs. Moore's son, and the City Magistrate of Chandrapore. We meet this queer cautious girl for the first time in the English Club, expressing her deep desire 'to see the real India'. Her interest in India suddenly alarms the other English ladies present in the club and they say that she isn't a 'pukka' Miss Quested is not a beautiful woman. She has hardly any physical charm. She has practically no breasts, no curves of the body to attract a man. But it is her men tal qualities that appeal to us. She is much too individual. That is the remarkable quality about her.

Adela shows a great desire to see the real India. The Bridge Party gives her an opportunity to come in contact with the Indians. She is pained to see that the Anglo-Indians do not behave pleasantly to the Indians. She does not like her countrymen posing like gods. She believes in the dignity of man as man. She is quite liberal in her outlook. She thinks that after her marriage with the City Magistrate, her life would become dull and monotonous. She would not be able to rub shoulders with the Indians. She would see India always as a frieze, never as a spirit. She would become a slave of her environment :

> "In front, like a shutter, fell a vision of her married life. She and Ronny would look into the club like this every evening, then drive home to dress, they would see the Lesleys and the Callendars and the Turtons and the Burtons, and invite them and be invited by them while the true India slid by unnoticed."

Although Miss Quested had known Ronny well in England, she felt it well advised to visit him before deciding to be his wife. India had developed sides of his character that she had never admired. She disliked Ronny's self-complacency and his hyper-critical nature. She disliked that Public School attitude by which Ronny was always guided. She condemned Ronny's rude behaviour at Mr. Fielding's. She had always believed in the sanctity of personal relationship and Ronny had trespassed it. It was this quality which had drawn them together at their first meeting, which had occurred among the grand scenery of the English lakes. But Ronny was changed now. Therefore, Adela decided not to marry him. But the physical touch of their bodies again drew them together and sealed the bond of friendship. The accident in the Nawab Bahadur's car, creating the physical sensations in the bodies of the two lovers, renewed their abortive friendship. But that was a mere animal passion. Adela could never love Ronny from the depth of her heart. When she was going to see the caves, her mind was pre-occupied with her marriage, 'She and Ronny—no, they did not love each other.' The discovery had come so suddenly that she felt like a mountainer whose rope had broken. 'Not to love the man one's going to marry! Not to find out till this moment!' She tried to console herself by saying, 'if love is everything, few marriages would survive the honeymoon.' All this shows that her love for Ronny was not very deep. She did not really wish to marry him. That explains her odd behaviour in the Marabar picnic. She suffers from a hallucination more or less, of the type when a woman thinks she has an offer of marriage, while really she has none.

The finest and the most heroine-like part played by Miss Quested is to be seen in the court scene. She determines to tell the truth and nothing but the whole truth. The reputation of her community lies on her statement. If she withdraws her accusation, Dr. Aziz is set free, and the Britishers are badly humiliated. If she does not do so, she proves false to her own intellectual honesty. What should she do? The conflict goes on in her mind, and ultimately her desire to speak truth overcomes every other consideration. Fielding knew that 'she was such a dry, sensible girl, and quite without malice; the last person in Chandrapore wrongfully to accuse an Indian'. Adela withdraws her accusation and Aziz is set free. Thus she prefers to damage the prestige and honour of her own English community to doing something which would always prick her conscience. The result is that she has to bear all the insults and humiliations; she has to break off her relations with her English friends; she has to break off her engagement with Ronny; and ultimately, she has to go back to England, disappointed, frustrated, and humiliated. And yet she would not care for all this. She shows her intellectual honesty, and sticks to her own principles. This makes her character really heroic, exalted, and sublime:

> "Disaster had shown her limitations, and she realized now what a fine loyal character she was. Her humility was touching. She never repined at getting the worst of both worlds, she regarded it as the due punishment of her stupidity."

Adela has a great love and deep regard for Mrs. Moore. She always thinks that Mrs. Moore has been able to catch the real spirit of India. When she suffers from the terrible echo, she thinks that only Mrs. Moore can save her from this disaster. She is pretty sure that Mrs. Moore knows the secret of that terrible echo. Her friendship with Mrs. Moore was so deep and real that she felt sure it would last, whatever else happened. After Mrs. Moore's death, she thinks her first duty to go back to England and look after the children of her dead friend. That again shows her deep sincerity and honesty.

Adela's visit to India proves to be very costly for her, but it gives her the opportunity to pass through the fire of experiences and come out quite successfully. She does not feel sorry for what she has lost. She makes a compromise with her life. Although she does not believe in God, she dreams of a universal religion—a religion having no narrow barriers, embracing the entire mankind into one fold. Her religion is humanity; her God is Universal brotherhood.

(e) Mr. Ronny Heaslop

Ronny Heaslop is a typical product of her Public School atmosphere. The public schools, Forster thinks, do not create individuals; they produce only types. Students leaving their public schools in England go out into the world with well-developed bodies, fairly-developed minds and underdeveloped hearts. And it is this underdeveloped heart that is largely responsible for the difficulties of Englishmen abroad. An underdeveloped heart—not a cold one'. And Ronny is the best example of that underdeveloped heart.

Ronny was educated in a Public School in England. From there he had developed the herd instinct. He had lost all his finer sensibilities of early life, even his individuality. The views and opinions that he expressed from time to time were not his own. He was a Sahib in the making His officers said : 'He's the type we want, he's one of us.' It was his belief that the Englishmen ruled over India not for behaving pleasantly to the Indians but for holding this wretched country by force. He plainly tells his mother :

> "I am out here to work, mind, to hold this wretched country by force I'm not a missionary or a Labour Member or a vague sentimental sympathetic literary man. I'm just a servant of the Government, it's the profession you wanted me to choose for myself, and that's that. We're not pleasant in India, and we don't intend to be pleasant. We've something more important to do."

Ronny worked very hard in the court from morning till evening, and discharged the duties of a City Magistrate quite satisfactorily. But he lacked the touch of humanitarianism which he had in his early boyhood. The public-school atmosphere had made him self-complacent. He felt great delight in the drawbacks of his situation. 'One touch of true regret from his heart would have made him a different man, and the British Empire a different institution—so thinks Mrs. Moore and we too, for that matter.

Ronny's attitude towards the Indians is that of a typical Anglo-Indian. He does not want to treat the Indians on equal footing. He maintains the master-slave relationship. He does not wish that either Adela or his mother should move among the Indians and be on friendly terms. He opposes the idea that they should go for a picnic under the auspices of the Indians. He does not like Dr. Aziz. He rebukes Mr. Fielding for leaving Miss Quested alone in the company of the Indians. His behaviour at Mr. Fielding's is quite rude and shocking. It is ungentlemanly, but from his own point of view it is correct. The only link he could be conscious of with an Indian was the official. As private individuals he forgot them.

Ronny's fiance Adela never admired his hostile attitude towards the Indians. She did not like his self-complacency, his over-critical nature, and his lack of subtlety. But Ronny seemed quite indifferent to what was passing in the minds of his friends. He always felt that he was right, or even if he was wrong, it didn't matter much. When Adela told him that she had finally decided not to marry him, he was not at all upset. He was quite decent and self-composed towards her. He did not much care about love. When Adela withdrew her accusation against Dr. Aziz, Ronny broke off the engagement. He did not feel any pain in doing so. He really could not marry her —it would mean the end of his career. And moreover, she

belonged to the callow academic period of his life which he had outgrown—Grasmere, serious talks, and walks that sort of thing.

On the whole, the character of Ronny has not been drawn in a favourable light. He becomes the victim of Forster's satire, although he is true to his own profession and community, he has the imperialistic strain in his character, and he regards himself as the true representative of the British Government. He is following in the footsteps of the Turtons and the Burtons, and is on his way to becoming *a pucca*. He is less an individual, and more a type.

(C) STYLE

Forster's greatest claim to his safe position in the realm of fiction and his consequent popularity and claims to immortality rest on his fine and almost elusive prose style. His style is a direct reflection of his personality and temperament. It is personal 'in the sense that it keeps us very much aware of the personality of the writer, so that even when actions, events, and the experiences of characters are supposed to be speaking for themselves, the turn of phrase and tone of voice bring the presenter and commentator into the foreground.'[1] In Forster's case, therefore, style is the man. It reflects the temperament of a complete artist rounded by the emotions of a noble heart and the disquietude of a frank courageous mind.

A noteworthy quality of the prose of Mr. Forster is its pictorial potentiality. Like Conrad he does not describe scenes deliberately trying to make them picturesque and as beautiful as possible. But at times his prose naturally does that job with perfect ease and beauty. That generally happens when he describes some natural scene. Here is a pictorial description of an insipid sunrise :

1. Dr. Leavis, F. R.—The Common Pursuit. p. 275.

> "As she spoke, the sky to the left-turned angry orange. Colour throbbed and mounted behind a pattern of trees, grew in intensity, was yet brighter, incredibly brighter, strained from without against the globle of the air".

They awaited the miracle. But at the supreme moment, when night should have died and day lived, nothing occurred. It was as if virtue had failed in the celestial fount. The hues in the east decayed, the hills seemed dimmer though in fact better lit, and a profound disappointment entered with the morning breeze. Why, when the chamber was prepared, did the bridgegroom not enter with trumpets and shawms as humanity expects? The sun rose without splendour"

Mr. Forster thinks that the purpose of the artist is not to work on words for their own sake, but to create something that is at once substantial and easeful. To appeal to the heart and the mind of the reader is much more important for him than to appeal to the ear alone, Were sound is nothing. Scholarship should not be thrust on the reader at all. It is necessary no doubt, but it is not at all necessary to exhibit it for its own sake, 'Much of his art consists in the plainness of his writing for he is certain of the truth of his convictions and the force of his emotions. It is the writer who is not so sure what to say or how he feels who is apt to over-write either to conceal his ignorance or to come unexpectedly on an answer. Similarly it is the novelist who finds it hard to create character who indulges in fine writing. This unemphatic, even style of Forster's makes him easy to re-read; for it contains nothing of which one can get tired except sprightliness. But there is another reason why the work of Forster remains fresh. His style has not been imitated.[1] With him style is more of a matter of emotion and involuntary habits of feeling than of pure intellect. His style is more human and natural than laboured. It has the realism of a scientist, the didacticism of a fresh and joyful humanitarianism., and the ennobling touches of a reformer.

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1. Cyril Connolly: Enemies of Promise (Penguin Ed. p. 18).

But no less charming is his analytical bend of style. As a satirical scrutinier of the human heart, Forster has a few peers. But his humanism never allows him to be harsh and there is always a deep under-current of board sympathy beneath whatever he says. Sometimes his analysis tends to be almost psycho-analytical, as in the case of Miss Adela Quested when she is on her way to the marabar expedition or in the court scene. Forster has, however, nothing of the Freudian obsession with that. Here is a line about Dr. Aziz :

> "She had died soon after he had fallen in love with her, he had not loved her at first. Touched with western feelings he dislike union with a woman whom he had never seen. Moreover when he did see her, she disappointed him and he got his first child in mere animality."

Forster's style is precise and poetical. It has flow and lucidity. It is illumined by the fine flashes of his persuasively passive wit. It is, to quote Professor Rutherford, "a bit crude, yet bright, clear as well as clever, appearing at times to cover an earnest purpose with a cloak of buffoonery on. There is nothing of Oscar Wilde's semi-castic phrases nor Shawian attempt at moulding ironic with satire no Conradian attempt at beautifying prose. Forster's prose is clear, a bit nervous, entirely devoid of conventional literary terms, full of illustrations from plain man's experiences, full of sentiments that strike one at first as idiotic but prove on closer examination to enshrine a serious idea."

"Forster's style," says Dr. Johnstone, "reaches its apogee of strength and brilliance in *A Passage to India*. The ease and lucidity of *Howards End* are retained, but new realms are triumphantly entered, new effects of imagery and rhythm achieved. The description of the Marabar Caves is richer than anything that is to be found in the previous novels."[1]

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1. The Bloomsbury Group, p. 265.

"There is little to see, and no eye to see it, until the visitor arrives for his five minutes, and strikes a match. Immediately another flame rises in the depths of the rock and moves towards the surface like an imprisoned spirit : the walls of the circular chamber have been most marvellously polished. The two flames approached and strive to unite, but cannot, because one of them breathes air, the other stone. A mirror inlaid with lovely colours divides the lovers, delicate stars of pink and grey interpose, exquisite nebulae, shadings fainter than the tail of a comet or the midday moon, all the evanescent life of the granite, only here visible. Fists and fingers thrust above the advancing soil—here at last in their skin, finer than any covering acquired by the animals, smoother than windless water, more voluptuous than love. The radiance increases, the flames touch one another, kiss, expire. The cave is dark again, like all the caves."

A Passage to India abounds in such wonderful descriptions. This descriptive charm of Forster's style has a great fascination over the mind of the readers. The description of Mrs. Moore's trip across India, and of her regret at leaving the country is resonant with Indian names :

"She would never visit Asirgarh or the other untouched places ; neither Delhi nor Agra nor the Rajputana cities nor Kashmir, nor the obscurer marvels that had sometimes shone through men's speech ; the billngual rock of Girnar, the statue of Shri Belgola, the ruins of Mandu and Hampi, temples of Khajraha, gardens of Shalimar."

Forster's style "is as sure," says Dr. Johnstone, "when

the whimsical, wise simplicity of Godbole's speech is undertaken ; or when the punkah wallah, who continues to work the fan after Aziz's trial has ended and the court-room has emptied, is described in one of the most beautiful prose rhythms in the novel : "......before long no one remained on the scene of the fantasy but the beautiful naked god. Unaware that any thing unusual had occurred, he continued to pull the cord of his punkah, to gaze at the empty dais and the overturned special chairs, and rhythmically to agitate the clouds of descending dust." Forster's style will do anything for him in this novel. After all this brilliance, it draws the book to its satisfying close in the sustained translucent beauty of "Temple."[1]

"If *A Passage to India*", continues D. Johnstone, "is Forster's last novel, neither we nor Forster need be disappointed. It is a worthy, valediction."[2]

(D) RHYTHM

"Expansion. That is the idea the novelist must cling to. No completion. Not rounding off but opening out. When the symphony is over we feel that the notes and tunes composing it have been liberated, they have found in the rhythm of the whole their individual freedom Cannot the novel be like that ?"

That is the question, Mr. Forster ask in his *Aspects of the Novel*[3], and for reply he turns to music. He says, "music is the deepest of the arts and keep beneath the arts," that it, "more than the other arts, postulates a double existence. It exists in time, and also exists outside time, instaneously."[4] That is what Mr. Forster demands from a good novel—life in time as well as life by values. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that in tying to

1. The Bloomsbury Croup : pp. 265-66.
2. The Bloomsbury Group : p. 266.
3. P. 155 (Pocket Edition).
4. Forster's address before the Harvard Symposium of Music in 1947.

explain what for him is a basic aspect of the novel, Forster should turn to music for a parallel ;

Rhythm, Forster says is sometimes quite easy to explain. "Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, for instance, starts with the rhythm 'diddidy dum', which we can all hear and tap to. But the symphony as a whole has also a rhythm—due mainly to the relation between its movements —which some people can hear but no one can tap to. This second sort of rhythm is difficult, and whether it is substantially the same as the first sort only a musician could tell us. What a literary man wants to say is that the first kind of rhythm, the *diddidy dum*, can be found in certain novels and may give them beauty.'[1]

"E.M. Forster's description and interpretation of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in *Howards End*", suggests Dr. V.A. Shahane,[2] "is highly subjective. It reveals his intensely individualistic approach to music and his endeavour to express it through character and situation—the whole design of the novel itself." Forster admits that 'Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is the most sublime noise that has ever penetrated into ear of man.'[3] It is difficult to achieve those effects in fiction, yet it may be present in some of the novels. Forster's innovation of *rhythm* brings the novel into association with music. Aldous Huxley also stands for the musicalization of fiction. 'Not in the symbolist way, by subordinating sense to sound. But on a large scale, in the construction. Meditate on Beethoven. The changes of moods, the abrupt transitions.................. A theme is stated, then developed, pushed out of shape, imperceptibly deformed, until, though still recognizably the same, it has become quite different. In sets of variations the process is carried a step further......Get this into a novel. How ? A novelist modulates by redu-

1. Aspects of the Novel, p. 151. (Pocket Edition)
2. Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in Howards End ; (The Indian Journal of English Studies, 1960, p. 100)
3. Howards End, Pocket Ed., 1951, p. 32.

plicating situations and characters. He shows several people falling in love, or dying, or praying in different ways—dissimilars solving the same problem. Or, *vice versa*, similar people confronted with dissimilar problems. In this way you can modulate through all the aspects of your theme, you can write variations in any number of different moods.'[1]

'I can't see,' said Andre' Gide with whom Forster has many similarities, 'why what was possible in music should be impossible in literature.' And music, Forster says, is the novel's "nearest parallel." So, "after one has read *War and Peace* for a bit, great chords begin to sound, and we cannot say exactly what struck them." The novelist, of course, may give up his views of life and the universe by direct comment, but his deeper, more significant intuitions welling up from the subconscious, are expressed in other ways. Thus, Forster believes, the great chords that sound in *War and Peace* come mainly from Tolstoy's feeling for, and sense of, space: "they come from the immense area of Russia, over which episodes and characters have been scattered, from the sum-total of bridges and frozen rivers, forests, roads, gardens, fields which accumulate grandeur and sonority after we have passed them."

Thus, Forster's conception of the rhythm is to stitch the novel from inside and to achieve beauty on that account. There are two major types of rhythm that is, of "repetition plus variation—available to the novelist, as is evident from the above analysis of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. One is the "easy" rhythm, which is created by variations upon an image, and, thus, corresponds to the musical phrase like *diddidy dum* E. K. Brown[2] calls it the "expanding symbol." It has no regularity about it. "There are times when the little *musical* phrase means everything to the reader. There are times when it means nothing and is forgotten, and this seems to me the function of rhythm in fiction ; not to be there all the time like

1. Aldous Huxley. Point Counter Point (1928) Ch. xxii.
2. Rhythm in the Novel. Toronto, 1950.

a pattern, but by its lovely waxing and waning to fill us with surprise and freshness and hope."[1]

The "difficult" rhythm corresponds to the relation of the major "blocks of sound" in a symphony. Forster asks in his *Aspects of the Novel* :

> "Is there any effect in novels comparable to the effect of the Fifth Symphony as a whole, where, when the orchestra stops, we hear something that has never actually been played ? The opening movement, the andante, and the trio-scherzo trio-finale-trio-finale that composes the third block, all enter the mind at once, and extend one another into a common entity. This common entity, this new thing, is the symphony as a whole, and it has been achieved mainly (though not entirely) by the relation between the three big blocks of sound which the orchestra has been playing. I am calling this relation 'rhythmic.' "[2]

Forster finds something of this difficult rhythm in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and he himself tries to achieve it in *A Passage to India.*

A Passage to India contains both types of rhythm—easy as well as difficult—and here, at least, Forster has achieved the degree of final liberation and expansion which he considers necessary for a good novel He frequently makes use of 'repetition plus variation'. Certain images are introduced, forgotten, and then again recollected. There is the recurrent image of the wasp. First, Mrs. Moore perceives a wasp on a peg, as she goes to hang up her cloak in her son's house ; then, a wasp is discussed by two missionaries ; and, finally, a wasp is recollected by Professor Godbole during the Mau ceremony Similarly there are numerous other returns. "Then you are an Oriental," says Aziz to Ralph Moore, Mrs Moore's son

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1. E. M. Forster : Aspects of the Novel, pp. 153-54 (Italics ours).

2. Ibid, p. 154.

and he immediately shudders to think that he had spoken the same words to Mrs. Moore in the Mosque. Asirgarh, a fortress town which Mrs. Moore sees as she journeys through the Vindhya mountains, appears, vanishes, reappears. She can see it from the train window.

> " No one had ever mentioned Asirgarh to her, but it had huge and noble bastions and to the right of them was a mosque. She forgot it. Ten minutes later. Asirgarh reappeared. The mosque was to the left of the bastions now. The train in its descent through the Vindhyas had described a simicircle round Asirgarh. What could she connect it with except its own name? Nothing; she knew no one who lived there. But it had looked at her twice and seemed to say: "I do not vanish."

Nothing vanishes from *A Passage to India.* The words *come, come. come,* appear again and again like a musical phrase. Repetition of this word forms a rhythmic device. Then, there is the chant of "Esmiss Esmoor" outside the court. In the temple there is the musical chorus : *Tukaram, Tukaram.* In the first part of the novel, there is the song of Professor Godbole ; in the second part there is the musical recitation of Esmiss Esmoor's name ; and in the third part there is an accumulated type of music known as *Kirtan.* Thus, the three parts of the novel are like three blocks of sound in Beethoven's symphony.

The echo of the caves serves a double purpose of repetition and variation. It becomes the major expanding symbol of the novel. The disparity of positions is to be clearly seen in the influence of the caves on Mr. Fielding, Miss Adela Quested and Mrs. Moore. The similar hills produce dissimilar effect on these people. To Mrs. Moore the echo has brought about a complete demolition of all values : to Adela it has brought a sort of hallucination, and to Fielding, it is not the interior of the caves but their distant view that disturbs. E. K. Brown says that in the description of hills and caves, Forster "is taking

his characters beyond their depth ;" their minds, "Western, modern, complex, cannot operate on the level of primitivism which the hills and the caves exemplify." The vastness of these caves and bills is disturbing to Fielding who is an agnostic and lives wholly within the rational world. But Mrs. Moore accepts the vastness of these caves as she is 'aware of the huge expanse beyond the phenomenal world and of a divine unity encompassing that expanse."

" In the cave symbology, then." says James McConkey. " Forster has accomplished an intricate multiple functioning which binds the whole novel together in a way hardly short of the miraculous. In terms of plot, the caves provide the basis for Adela's accusation of Aziz ; in terms of meaning, they represent a multiplicity of thematic strands. They represent the complete divorce of human spirit from earth, a statement of man as alien on earth. They suggest the impasse which western civilization has reached : in his separation from earth and in his inability to find divinity in the cosmic motion, man has unwittingly reached a spiritual negation. Yet the caves suggest, too that a reality exists beyond time and space to which man's consciousness cannot fully reach, and to which that consciousness, even as it reaches out to apprehend ultimate reality, finally is a barrier. The caves in yet another way symbolize the world in which the characters—and mankind—live. Indeed, the whole universe as it is found in the novel is but one of the Marabar Caves."[1]

That is how through the help of symbolism, Forster clings to the idea of 'liberation' and 'expansion' in *A Passage to India*. "In it," says James McConkey. "Forster has wedded the rhythmic devices of music—the return again and again, with variations, of a theme—more perfectly to prose than he has ever managed before, and he has even utilized that return itself (in the form of the echo) as one of the major expanding images

1, The Novels of E. M. Forster, p. 148.

of the novel. The novel achieves, more fully than any other he has written, the final expansion for which he has always sought, the expansion which is the novel as a whole and which occurs within the reader after the novel has been finished."[1] Such an expansion is produced by Beethoven's Fifth Symphony "mainly by the relation between the three big blocks of sound which the orchestra has been playing." The three sections of *A Passage to India*,as E.K. Browne[2] points out, correspond to three such blocks, and the whole pattern is the "rise-fall-rise" that Forster finds in *War and Peace*. This attainment of the greatest degree of liberation and expansion makes *A Passage to India* "not only Forster's greatest novel, but one of the outstanding literary accomplishments of the twentieth century."[3]

1. Ibid. p. 150.
2. Rhythm in the Novel, Toronto, 1950.
3. James McConkey : The Novels of E. M. Forster, p. 157-58.

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A Passag to India : Som Critical Opinions

"......a classic on the strange and tragic fact of history and life called India."

—Lowes Dickinson

[Quoted on the back cover of *A Passage to india*, Penguin Edition.]

"......an oasis in the desert of Anglo-Indian fiction" —Dr. Bhupal Singh

[A Survey of Anglo-Indian Fiction]

A Passage to India is not only Forster's greatest novel, but one of the outstanding literary accomplishments of the twentieth century."

—James McConkey [*The Novels of E. M. Forster*]

" .....*A Passage to India*, all criticisms made, is a classic : not only a most significant document of our age, but a truly memorable work of literature It is a classic of the liberal spirit, is no less obvious. In its touch upon cultural and racial problems, its treatment of personal relations, and in prevailing ethos, the book is an expression undeniably, of the liberal tradition......"

—Dr. F. R. Leavis [*The Common Pursuit*]

"*A Passage to India* is probably the most important and most widely read of Forster's novels, yet it remains the most controversial and mystifying. Varying inter-

pretations view the work as an expression of the embracing or rejection of Hinduism, the triumph of India over England or vice versa, the way of the intellect or the way of the spirit, hope for universal understanding or the very impossibility of such union. The novel's immediate popular success was doubtless the result of a many-faceted quality which appeals to all demands."

—Ellin Horowitz

[*The Communal Ritual and the Dying God in E.M. Forster's "A Passage to India*]"

"*A Passage to India* is not, as some critics have claimed, on expression of Forster's personal disillusion. Nor is it "almost unbelievably crude and weak" in its attempt at making a poetic communication about life. It is the last and best of Forster's attempts in that most difficult genre, the novel of ideas. It is an almost-successful attempt at an all but-impossible task : an attempt to fuse the real value of social comedy and human conflict with the meaning and value of the universe which that world mirrors; to impose on experience the pattern of a moral vision; and out of these desperate elements to create a satisfying aesthetic whole. The wonder is not that it fails of complete success, but that it so nearly succeeds completely."

—Gertrude. M. White

["*A Passage to India;*" *Analysis and Revaluation*]

"*A Passage to India* is and will remain the subtlest effort in our time to write the novel of ideas in English."

—E. K. Brown

[*E. M. Forster and the Contemplative Novel*]

"*A Passage to India* is the most comfortable and even the most conventional of Forster's novels. It is under the control not only of the author's insight; a huge, hulking physical fact which he is not alone in seeing, requiring that the author submit to its veto-power.

Consequently, this is the least surprising of Forster's novels, the least capricious and, indeed, the least personal."

—Lionel Trilling.

[*E. M. Forster : A study*]

"*A Passage to India* has something in common with works which other artists have produced towards the end of their careers, with Ibsen's *Master Builder*, Shaw's *Apple Cart* (after which Shaw should have stopped writing plays, for he has nothing further to say in them). Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Turners last paintings and Virginia Woolf's *Between the Acts* ....It's the only novel of Forster's that has no specific message. It only presents a view of India, and, through that view, a view of life."

—Dr. J. K. Johnstone.

[*The Bloomsbury Group*]

"*A Passage to India* is too great a work of art to render up any simple view of life. On the surface it presents the magnitude, mystery and complexity of India; symbolically it presents the complex mystery of all life and is a study of the problem of evil in the universe."

—Dr. A. S. Collins

[*English Literature of the Twentieth Century*]

"If Forster's earlier novels were water-colours, his last one has the scale and comprehensiveness and richness and confidence of a canvas in oils by a master. It is a prophetic book not only about race-relations but also about personal ones."

—K. W. Gransden

[*E.M. Forster at Eighty, Encounter*]

"*A Passage to India*......is certainly a master piece, though rather spoilt for me by my being completely mystified about the main incident in the story, and there

has been a strain of occultism in his books which has baffled me—but he's a great and charming artist......"

—Edward Marsh

[Quoted by J. B. Beer in *The Achievement of E. M. Forster*]

"I think it's a marvellous texture—really beautiful writing. But Oh Lord I wish he weren't a mystic, or that he would keep his mysticism out of his books . ...I am certain that the only meaning that are worth anything in a work of art are those that the artist himself knows nothing about. The moment he tries to explain *his* ideas and *his* emotions he misses the great thing."

—Roger Fry

[*Virginia Woolf*]

"*A Passage to India,* then, is a novel in which two levels of truth, the human and the divine, are simultaneously explored, never very successfully. Epistemological conclusions are reached, but they are all negative ones. Christian righteousness, we discover, helps us to misconstrue both God and man; Moslem love can scarcely reach beyond the individual personality ; rational skepticism is wilfully arid, and the Hindu ideal of oneness, though it does take notice of the totality of things, abolishes the intellectual sanity that makes life endurable to the Western mind The inescapable point of this demonstration is that God cannot be realized in any satisfactory way."

—Frederick C. Crews

[*E. M. Forster : The Perils of Humanism*]

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APPENDIX

CHAPTERWISE SUMMARY

A Passage to India

PART I

MOSQUE

Chapter 1

The city of Chandrapore was never a large or beautiful city. It had nothing extra-ordinary except for the Marabar Caves, which were about twenty miles off, in the Marabar Hills. It was a city of gardens, scattered with huts and trees. It was situated on the banks of the river Ganges. There were no bathing steps on the river-front. The streets were narrow and dirty. The bazaars were devoid of any decorations. On a rise above the town, stood the Civil Station, and on another ground was situated the Civil Hospital. The houses belonging to the Anglo-Indians stood on the high ground by the railway station. On the southern horizon rose the Marabar Hills like "fists and fingers." Seen from a distance, they presented quite a romantic view. In the evening, they seemed to move graciously towards the city like a queen, and their charms became the sky's. The sky was so strong and enormous that it settled everything—the climate, the seasons, and the beauty of the earth. Sometimes the sky became so colourful that it would shower a rain of glory over the whole city. Then the bazaars would put on a new garb and look attractive and charming.

Chapter 2

Dr. Aziz was an assistant-surgeon in the Civil Hospital, under Major Callendar. He was a widower, having

two sons and one daughter who lived with his wife's mother. He went to dine with his friends, Hamidullah and Mahmood Ali. They were also educated Mohammedans. They were discussing a serious problem—whether or not it was possible to be friends with an Englishman. Hamidullah, who had recently been to Cambridge and had received a cordial welcome by the English, said that it was possible in England. But Mahmood Ali, who had recently been insulted in the court of the City Magistrate, Mr. Ronny Heaslop, said that it was impossible here at least in India. They came to the conclusion that the Anglo-Indian atmosphere prevailing in India spoiled the best Englishman in a year or two. The English woman, too, were haughty and arrogant like Mrs. Turton, the Collector's wife. During the course of their talks, Aziz received a message from Major Callendar, who desired to see him at his bungalow. Aziz thought that the Major had called him just to show his powers and not because he actually needed him. So fuming over the message, he left the party, hired a tonga, and started for the Civil surgeon's bungalow. To his great disgust, he found the Major out, without leaving any message for him. An indifferent servant gave him a cold reception. In the meantime, two English ladies came out and drove off in his tonga, without even consulting him ; Aziz felt bitter and he left the bungalow. He walked down to a nearby mosque to take some rest. In the mosque there was tank of fresh clear water which was always in motion. Aziz began to think about Islam, and soon he was lost in his thoughts. He was suddenly started by the appearance of an English lady in the mosque. The lady was Mrs. Moore, mother of the City Magistrate, Ronny Heaslop. Her polite and sympathetic behaviour soon won the heart of Dr. Aziz. She was on a visit from England with Miss Quested, who was expected to marry her son, Ronny. She had left the suffocating atmosphere of the English Club, and had come out for a stroll in a moonlit night. The peaceful atmosphere of the mosque gave her a peculiar solace, and seeing the tank of fresh water, she suddenly declared : "God is here" Dr. Aziz told her about the hostile attitude of the Anglo-Indians towards the natives. Mr. Moore was

simply shocked to learn from him that the Indians were not allowed in the Chandrapore Club even as guests. Both the friends came out of the mosque and Dr. Aziz escorted her back to the Club.

Chapter 3

A play was going on in the English Club, when Mrs. Moore re-entered it. Even in the hot weather, the windows were closed, lest the servants (Indians, of course) should see their 'Sahebs' and 'mem-sahebs' acting. Miss Adela Quested was a queer, cautious girl whom Mrs. Moore had brought to India. She was supposed to, though not certainly, marry Ronny Heaslop. She expressed her deep desire to see the *real* India. Her remark created a stir among the English women present in the club. A lady who was a nurse in a native state before her marriage spoke ill of the Indians, Mrs. Callendar thought that the kindest thing one could do to a native was to let him die. Collector Turton was also full of disgust for the Indians. Mrs. Turton held that Mrs. Fielding, the Principal of Government College, was not a *pukka*, for he had a friendly attitude towards the Indians. She remarked that he had better marry Miss Quested, for she too was not a *pukka*.

Mrs. Moore told Ronny that she had met Dr. Aziz in the mosque. Ronny felt annoyed. He did not wish that his mother should have talked to a native. He asked her not to talk about Aziz to Adela. The note of anxiety in the voice made her feel that he was still a little boy. So she promised to do as he wished, and they kissed good-night.

Chapter 4

In order to give Mrs. Moore and Quested a good time, the Collector had made proposal for a Bridge Party —a party to bridge the gulf between East and West. The interpretation of the word pleased everybody. Invitations were issued to numerous Indian gentlemen and their wives. There was a great excitement in the city. Different persons interpreted the invitation in different ways. But

the Nawab Bahadur, a respectable and influential Indian advised everyone to attend the party.

Chapter 5

The Bridge Party, however, proved to be a failure. The gulf between the Anglo-Indians and the Indians remained as wide as ever. No body, except Mr. Fielding, paid attention to the Indian guests. He talked to everyone and he ate everything. But the other English officials and their ladies did not mix with the Indians. Mrs. Moore and Miss Quested tried to talk with some of the educated Indian ladies. Mrs. Turton and Mr. McBryde, the Superintendent of Police, also showed some common politeness. The rest remained stiff and arrogant. Miss Quested thought that the Englishmen did not treat their guests properly. She felt ashamed on their behaviour. She genuinely wished to be friends with the Indians. She began to dream of her future married life. She thought, she would also become a victim of the circumstances. Her life would become dull and monotonous. She would go to the Club every evening with Ronny ; she would receive guests at her house, and sometimes she would be invited by them. Thus, her life would pass in the company of the Turtons and the Burtons, while the true India would slid by unnoticed.

Lost in such thoughts, she drove back to Ronny's bungalow, had her dinner with Miss Derek and the McBrydes, and then went to bed. Mrs. Moore had an interview with her son. She told him that Adela was not pleased with the behaviour of the Englishmen towards the Indians, and that she did not like Englishmen posing like gods. Ronny told his mother that he was neither a missionary nor a sentimental sympathetic literary man. He was just a servant of the Government and his main duty was to hold India by force. India was not a drawing room that he should behave pleasantly. Ronny's ideas shocked Mrs. Moore. To him all Indians appeared alike. He could not think of human relations with the Indians. The only link he could understand with an Indian was the official one. Mrs. Moore, however, tried to convince

Ronny that India was part of the earth and God had put them on the earth in order to be pleasant to each other. God was omnipresent even in India, and He saw how the English were succeeding. Ronny felt a little gloomy and anxious at this argument of his mother He thought that this religious strain in her was a symptom of bad health. Mrs. Moore also realized that she had made a mistake in mentioning God, but she found herself quite helpless. God was constantly present in her thoughts ever since she entered India. Her real object of visiting India was, however, to see whether Ronny and Adela would succeed in becoming engaged to be married or not.

Chapter 6

Dr. Aziz did not go to attend the Bridge Party, though he had received the invitation. He recollected the sweet memories of his dead wife and mourned her sincerely. Then he went to the Maidan and played a game of polo with an English subaltern. Presently, Dr. Panna Lal, a timid Hindu Colleague of Dr. Aziz, came over there. Aziz had promised to manage Dr. Lal's horse, but he did not fulfil the promise. The result was that the horse took Lal into some hollyhocks at the Club. Dr. Lal felt nervous and humiliated Aziz left the place and came back home. There he found a chit containing an invitation from Mr. Fielding, asking him to come to tea the day after tomorrow. This invitation gave Dr. Aziz a peculiar joy. He had been invited by Fielding a month ago, but he had forgotten to go there. Aziz found the second invitation a true sign of courtesy. He longed to know everything about this splendid fellow. Hitherto, he had never met the Principal, and believed that the one serious gap in his life was going to be filled.

Chapter 7

Fielding was a good-tempered, intelligent fellow on the verge of middle age. He had a belief in education. He did not mind whom he taught. He had a liking for the Indians. Through the influence of his friends, he was nominated Principal of the little college at Chandrapore,

He liked his job very well and achieved a great success with his students. He was, however, unpopular with the English. He was not unpatriotic ; but his fault was that he freely moved with the Indians. Still the men tolerated him for the sake of his good heart and strong body; it was their wives who decided that he was not a sahib really. They disliked him. Fielding had no racial feelings because he was not brought up in an atmosphere where the herd instinct flourishes. He had true sympathies for the Indians. He had invited Miss Adela Quested and Mrs. Moore and also an Indian Professor Godbole. Dr. Aziz soon became intimate with Fielding and they had a good chat, quite personal and informal. In the meantime, Mrs. Moore and Adela also joined them. Aziz impulsively invited Mrs. Moore and Adela to visit the Marabar Caves. The arrival of Professor Godbole quieted him somewhat, but on the whole it was Aziz's afternoon. The Brahman, polite and enigmatic, did not impede his eloquence, and even praised it. He took his tea at a little distance from the outcasts.

The ladies were very curious to know about the Marabar Caves. Aziz undertook to explain. But presently it appeared that Aziz himself had never visited the caves. Prof Godbole seemed to know about them, but he did not tell anything. Aziz realized that Godbole was keeping something back. In the meantime Ronny came to call for Adela, and spoiled the pleasant afternoon. He was annoyed because Fielding had taken Mrs. Moore on a tour of the College, and Adela had been left alone to talk and smoke with two Indians. Aziz was upset because he had been the centre of attention ; and now he was rudely ignored by Ronny. His nerves were on edge, and he was impertinent to Ronny and greasily confidential to Adela, in spite of himself. When Fielding returned. Ronny scolded him for leaving Adela alone with Aziz and Godbole. Fielding wondered afterwards. Then Professor Godbole was asked to sing an Indian song. The song baffled the Western ear and seemed unintelligible. Ronny left the place. His steps died away and there was absolute silence.

Chapter 8

Although Miss Quested had known Ronny well in England, she felt it well advised to visit him before deciding to be his wife. India had developed sides of his character that she had never admired. He had become self-complacent and over-critical. He wanted to thrust down his own opinions over others. He never cared for what was passing in the minds of his fellows. He was a typical product of a Public School—an under-developed heart. How gross he had been at Mr. Fielding's—spoiling the talk and walking off in the middle of that haunting song! Adela decided not to marry him. That evening she told him about her decision. The news hurt Ronny very much, but it did not upset him. She had; actually, almost unconsciously, announced to the company at Fielding's tea that she had no mind to stay in India, and Aziz had referred to her remark before Ronny, but Ronny had paid no attention to him. He was badly disappointed when he heard it from Adela. But he took it well and behaved decently.

Ronny and Adela were at the Maidan, and the Nawab Bahadur asked them to come for a ride in his new car. As they set off he referred humorously to Dr. Panna Lal's accident which demaged the hedges at the club. He intended to take them down the Gangawati Road, but he fell asleep beside his Eurasian chauffeur almost as soon as the drive began. Ronny instructed the driver to take the Marabar road instead, since the Gangawati Road was under repair. As they drove through the darkness, a jolt caused Adela's hand to touch Ronny's "and one of the thrills so frequent in the animal kingdom passed between them, and announced that all their difficulties were only a lovers' quarrel." Then, just after they had crossed a bridge over a nullah, there was an accident. The car swerved out of control and came to a stop at the edge of an embankment. But no one had been hurt. Only Adela had seen the cause of the accident; an animal with a hairy back, she said, rushed out of the night and struck the side of the car. The Nawab Bahadur was horrified.

Ronny and Adela, united once more, went back along the road with an electric torch to look for tracks; but the road was used too much for any single animal's tracks to be distinguished. The Nawab Bahadur said that the accident would not have occurred if they had taken the Gangawati Road, and he began to blame his chauffeur. But Ronny explained to him how they had come to be on the Marabar road. Another car approached, and was stopped by Ronny. It was driven by Miss Derek, who had taken the Maharaja's car without his permission. She drove Adela, Ronny and the Nawab Bahadur back to Chandrapore. By the time Ronny and Adela reached Ronny's bungalow, they were engaged; and Ronny announced the engagement to his mother. When the announcement was over, Mrs. Moore wished her desire to go back to England, as her duties were evidently finished here.

Chapter 9

It was Sunday. Dr. Aziz fell slightly ill. He was on leave from the Hospital. He lay in his house thinking about beautiful women. He wanted to spend an evening with some girls, singing and all that, and ultimately culminating into voluptuousness, Yes, that was what he wanted: How could it be managed ? If Major Callendar had been an Indian, he would have remembered what young men are, and granted two or three days' leave to Calcutta without asking questions. But the Major assumed either that his subordinates were made of ice, or that they repaired to the Chandrapore bazaars. Aziz continued to think about beautiful women. He was not a man of scruples. He believed that a man could do any thing behind the curtain. There was no harm in deceiving society so long as it did not detect you. In the meantime Fielding entered his room unobserved, Aziz felt ashamed of his poor surroundings. He discussed with Fielding about God and religion and politics. Fielding had liked Aziz so much that he was in the hope of developing his relations with Dr. Aziz.

Chapter 10

The heart had grown intolerable. April, herald of horrors, was at hand. The sun was returning to his kingdom with power but without beauty—that was the sinister feature. If only there had been beauty! His cruelty would have been tolerable then. There was excess of light but no brightness.

Chapter 11

Aziz showed Fielding a photograph of his deceased wife—a great compliment, because Aziz believed in the purdah. He told Fielding that he was the first English man she had ever come before, Fielding was astonished, as a traveller who suddenly sees, between the stones of the desert, flowers. The flowers had been there all the time, but suddenly he saw them. Fielding was much gratified by the compliment. Aziz told him that the Indians needed kindness, more kindness, and even after that more kindness. That was the only hope. He further told him that he had three children ; and he regretted that Fielding, who was unmarried, would have no children behind him ; Fielding replied that he would far rather leave a thought than a child. "A hard-bitten, good-tempered, intelligent fellow, on the verge of middle age", Fielding was indeed rather coldly intellectual, for all his desire to be friends with the Indians. He was sane, experienced, and clear-sighted. He'd been in love, engaged to be married, but the lady had broken it off. Memories of her and thoughts of her had kept him from other women for some time, but after that he indulged too much in women until he had to repent and lead a life of equilibrium. Aziz asked him why hedid not marry Miss Quested. Fielding replied

that she was a prig and she depressed him. She was not beautiful, she had practically no breasts. Fielding wanted to travel light, and therefore, he did not marry. So this was why. Fielding and a few others were so fearless, thought Aziz. After sometime Fielding left Dr. Aziz. They were friends, brothers, that part was settled. They trusted one another. and their compact had been seald by the photograph. Aziz dropped off to sleep, and soon he was transported to the realm of beauty and romance, where eternal joys abide, where moon never wanes, and where flowers bloom till eternity.

PART II

CAVES

Chapter 12

The ancient Marabar Hills had something unspeakable about them. They were like nothing else in the world, and a glimpse of them made the breath catch. Inside the hills were innumerable caves, some of them with man-made entrance, others never unsealed since the arrival of the gods. A Marabar Cave can be readily described. A tunnel eight feet long, five feet high, three feet wide, leads to a circular chamber about twenty feet in diameter. This arrangement occurs again and again throughout the group of hills and this is all, this is a Marabar Cave. The caves are dark Even when they open towards the sun, very little light penetrates down the entrance tunnel into the circular chamber. When a visitor comes and strikes a match inside the caves, he can see their marvellously polished walls. One of them is rumoured within the boulder that swings on the summit of the highest of the hills. The boulder, because of its hollowness, moves even when a crow sits on it : hence its name is Kawa-Dol.

Chapter 13

Aziz had almost forgotten his offer to take Adela Quested and Mrs. Moore to the Marabar Caves. For him, it was the expression of a wish rather than an invitation. He did not consider it before hand nor did he intend it seriously. But he learnt, through a servant from the club that Miss Quested remembered his invitation ; and this report caused him to fear that she might be deeply offended if he neglected it. So he decided to see the matter

through. All who were present at Fielding's tea—Adela, Mrs. Moore, Professor Godbole, and Fielding himself—should come. They would travel to Marabar by train, and Aziz hired an elephant to meet them there. He made all the necessary arrangements for the comfort of his guests. He catered carefully for Hindu, Mohammedan and Christian. Trouble after trouble encountered him, but he conquered them all. At last the moment arrived. When Mrs. Moore and Miss Quested reached the Chandrapore station just before dawn, they found the platform swarming with servants and crowded with provisions. Aziz declared that it was the happiest moment of his life. But in spite of Aziz's preparations, the expedition began inauspiciously. Fielding and Godbole missed the train. The Brahman had miscalculated the time taken in his prayers. The two were held up at the gates of the level-crossing. Aziz could only call agonizingly to Fielding as the train left the station. He felt somewhat disheartened as he had counted on Fielding to help him manage the expedition. And Adela and Mrs. Moore were to discover that Professor Godbole might have been even more helpful than Fielding in the Marabar Hills.

Chapter 14

Miss Quested and Mrs. Moore had been feeling extremely dull for a fortnight. Ever since they heard the song of Professor Godbole, they had been feeling somewhat depressed. Mrs. Moore had grown apathetic both in body and soul. Adela had lost all enthusiasm. Mrs Moore had brought Adela and Ronny together by their mutual wish and beyond that she was unable to advise them. "She felt increasingly (vision or nightmare ?) that though people are important the relations between them are not, and that in particular too much fuss has been made over marriage, centuries of carnal embracement, yet man is no nearer to understanding man. And today she felt this with such force that it seemed itself a relationship itself a person how was trying to take hold of her hand." The train was proceeding towards the Marabar Hills. It had crossed a nullah. The wheels were producing the

sound-pomper, pomper, pomper. The nullah brought in Adela's mind some associations of a few days back. She began to think of Ronny and her furture married life. She told Mrs. Moore that the train must be near the scene of the accident now. But Mrs. Moore had fallen asleep. Perhaps she was dreaming of her children, Stella and Ralph, and was explaining to them that she could not be in two families at a time.

The train reached Marabar. The day had dawned. The scene was agreeable, but there was little colour in it. An elephant was ready for them. Aziz asked the ladies to mount this wild animal. It was one grand feature of the picnic. The elephant walked straight to the Kawa Dol. Aziz tried his best to entertain his guests, but he betrayed his ignorance regarding the caves. He told Mrs. Moore that one of the dreams of his life was fulfilled in having them both as his guests. Adela spoke of her marriage plans and of her future life in India. She told Aziz that although after marrying Ronny she would also be I belled an Anglo-Indian, yet she would try to avoid the Anglo-Indian mentality. Aziz was pleased to hear her remarks. Then they went to see the caves. The first cave was visited. In it Mrs. Moore had a horrible experience. The cave was dark and crowded with servants and with villagers who had curiously followed the party. Mrs. Moore was parted form Aziz and Adela ; she nearly fainted. She "didn't know who touched her, couldn't breathe and some vile naked thing struck her face and settled on her mouth like a pad." For an instance, Mrs. Moore went mad. She hit her head to and fro. There was a terrifying echo also in the cave.

Professor Godbole had never mentionded this echo. Whatever was spoken, the cave resounded the words 'Boum' or 'bou-oum' or 'Ou-boum'. Mrs. Moore immediately came out of the cave and she found that the naked pad was a poor little baby, astride its mother's hips. Mrs. Moore had not enjoyed her self in the cave and so she decided not to visit a second one. Aziz and Adela statred for the Kawa Dol. They had only one guide witht hem.

Mrs. Moore sank into a deckchair. She took out her writing-pad and began, 'Dear Stella, Dear Ralph', then stopped, and looked at the strange valley. Her eyes rose towards the entrance tunnel. No, she did not wish to repeat that experience. The echo started undermining her hold on life. Even the elephant became a nobody. She murmured : "Pathos, Piety, courage, they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value." She lost all interest in life. She thought of religion but she concluded 'poor little talkative Christianity" She knew that all its divine words from. 'Let there be Light' to 'It is finished' only amounted to 'boum,' Then she surrendered herself to the vision.

Chapter 15

As Adela climbed up to a large group of caves with Aziz and the guide, she continued to think of her forthcoming marriage with Ronny. Suddenly, she asked herself whether she and Ronny loved each other. The answer came 'No'—she and Ronny did not love each other ; She was reminded of the accident in Nawab Bahadurr's car. "There was esteem and animal contact at dusk, but the emotion that links them was absent," Should they marry without love ? She was inclined to think so. She thought that love was not everything in a marriage. If it had been so, few marriages would have survived the honeymoon. Suddenly she asked Aziz if he was married. Aziz replied 'Yes,' The second question came 'How many wives have you ? This question upset Dr. Aziz. He felt insulted. He dived into a cave to recover his composure. Adela, unaware that she had upset him, went into another cave, thinking with half her mind 'sight-seeing bores me', and wondering with the other half about marriage.

Chapter 16

Aziz waited for sometime inside the cave. Then he came out and found the guide alone. They heard the noise of a motor-car. It was coming towards the hills down the Chandrapore road. Aziz ran away to give this news to Adela,

but the guide told him that she had also entered a cave. But there were many number of cave and Aziz was at a loss to know which contained Adela. Caves appeared in every direction. Aziz thought Mrs. Quested was lost. He wiped his head and sweat began to stream inside his clothes. He cried aloud for Adela but all in vain. He called the guide and struck him in the face for a punishment. The guide ran away and Aziz was left alone. Then suddenly Aziz saw Adela, for down a gully that led from the mouth of the caves. She was speaking to another, lady and Aziz supposed that she had run down when she saw the car approaching. He heaved a sigh of relief and started back alone towards his camp. Suddenly he saw Adelais field-glasses at the mouth of a cave. Their leather strap was broken. Aziz put them into his pocket. Down in the plain he heard car starting, but he could not catch a second glimpse of that. When he reached the Camp, he found Mr. Fielding sitting with Mrs. Moore. He was overjoyed to see him. Fielding had come in the newly arrived car—Miss Derek's car. But where was Miss Derek? and where was Adela? Miss Derek's chauffeur soon arrived to announce that Miss Derek had driven Miss Quested back to Chandrapore Aziz did not care much for Adela's departure, but Fielding was troubled by it. Fielding also visited one or two caves but he was unimpressed by their view. At last the picnic was over and the party returned to Chandrapore. As soon as they reached the Chandrapore station, Dr. Aziz was placed under arrest. Ronny escorted Mrs. Moore. Fielding wanted to tell the Inspector of Police that he had been mistaken in arresting Aziz But Fielding was called off by the authoritative tones of Mr. Turton, and Aziz went on to prison alone.

Chapter 17.

The Collector who had been watching the arrest from the interior of the waiting-room, came out and spoke before Mr. Fielding that the worst thing in his whole career had happened. Miss Quested had been insulted in one of the Marabar Caves. Fielding pleaded for Aziz

but the circumstantial ev'dence was against him. The Collector was not at all prepared to listen that Dr. Aziz was not guilty. He told Fielding that the whole matter would be discussed in the club that eveninp and Fielding was also invited to join their discussion. He also told Fielding that he wanted to save the man but at the same time he had decided to avenge the girl.

The Marabar incident threw the whole city into a fever of racial feeling. All the Europeans were one on the issue. They lost their power of judgment and reason. On the other hand the Moslems had created a great donfusion on the platform. The Collector watched the situation cleverly and drove off to his bungalow.

Chapter 18.

Mr. McBryde, the District Superintendent of Police, was a different type of-man He was the most reflective and best educated of the Chandrapore officials. His attitude towards Aziz was very sympatheic. He told Aziz that ee would detain him until he gets bail and that his friends would, no doubt, be applying for it. He also told Aziz that under regulations, his friends would be allowed to visit him. Fielding went to see Mr. McBryde. He told him everything he knew without reservations. Miss Derek and Miss Quested were in a terrible state and Miss Derek had straightway driven the car into his bungalow. Since then he had taken down the charge and arranged for the arrest at the railway station, Asked what was the charge againt Aziz, Mr. McBryde replied that Aziz had followed Miss Quested into the Cave and made insulting advances. She hit at him with her field-glasses ; he pulled at them and the strap baoke, and that is how she got away. When they searched Aziz, they were in his pocket The logie of evidence said that Aziz was guilty, but Fielding refused to believe in this story. The Superintendent told him that there was an echo that appeared to have frightened her. Probably it had got on her nerves. Then the S P. told him that Miss Derek heard stones falling on the Kawa Dol and saw Miss Quested running straight down the face of a precipice. Miss Derek

immediately went to her rescue and saved her. Miss Quested could not bear Miss Derek's Indian Chauffeur near her—it was that which first caused Miss Derek to suspect that Miss Quested had been attacked. Fielding expressed his desire to see Miss Quested, but he was told, it was not possible, Mr. McBryde told Fielding that Aziz was, after all not a man of very high character. He was fixing up to see women at Calcutta. It was evident from a letter found in his possession. Then he had several photographs of women. Fielding replied that he was not concerned with the private life of any one and that the photograph was that of Aziz's wife. He asked if he could see Aziz. The Superintendent told him, 'No'. He could see Aziz only with the permission of the City Magistrate.

Chapter 19.

Hamidullah was waiting outside the Superintendent's Office. He sprang up with joy when he heard Fielding saying that Aziz was innocent. Fielding assured him that all action would be based on this assumption and the people who said he was guilty were wrong. Hamidullah told Fielding that they had decided to engage Amritrao, a Calcutta lawyer, to defend Aziz's case, because that lawyer was notoriously anti-British. Fielding wished that Aziz must be cleared, but with a minimum of racial hatred. He, therefore, did not like the idea of engaging Amritrao. He left the place and went back to his college. There he met Professor Godbole, who told him that he was leaving his service very shortly and was going to settle at Mau, a native state. Fielding tried to discuss Aziz's case with Professor Godbole. He asked him if Aziz was innocent or guilty, Godbole replied that the evil was performed by them all—by Aziz by the guide, by Fielding, by Godbole, by Godbole's student, by Miss Quested herself "When evil occurs," he said, "it expresses the whole of the universe. Similary when good occurs." Fielding objected that this was to preach that good and evil were the same. Godbole replied, "Oh, no, excuse me..... Good and evil are different, as their names imply. But they are both of them aspects of my Lord. He is present

in the one, absent in the other." And then Godbole cleverly changed the topic and began to discuss the antiquities in the Marabar Hills, of which he evidently had considerable knowledge. In the afternoon, Fielding got a permit to see Aziz and he saw him. He also wrote a letter to Miss Quested. He was sure that Miss Quested would be the last person in Chandrapore to accuse an Indian wrongfully.

Chapter 20

All the English ladies gathered in the club and decided to help Miss Quested and see Aziz punished. Men were also present in the club. Fielding enquired whether there was any official bulletin about Miss Quested's health or whether the serious reports were only due to gossip. Mrs. Turton called out, 'She's better.' The Civil Surgeon had brought this good news. Fielding heaved a sigh of relief. He had enraged the English at Chandrapore by openly supporting Dr. Aziz. The Collector wss angry. He wanted to flog every native he saw, but to do nothing that would lead to a riot or to the necessity for military intervention. The Collector insulted Fielding. Fielding resigned from the club (he had little choice but to do so) and went out. In order to cool down his mind he went on to the upper veranda of his house and the first object he saw the Marabar. Hills. They were looking extremely beautiful at that hour and from that distance. Fielding began to think—who was the guide, and had he been found yet ? What was the 'echo' of which Miss Quested complained ? He did not know but he wanted to know all these things very soon, as they would be helpful in clearing the name of Dr. Aziz.

Chapter 21

Fielding was glad that he had broken with the club. He travelled light now. He went to pass his evening with his Indian friends. Nawab Bahadur, Hamidullah and Mahmoud Ali. They invited him to inspect a small tazia. Moharrums were drawing near and the city beat a good many drums. The campain was also working up.

Fielding was told that a telegram had been sent to Amritrao and his acceptance received. Application for bail was also to be renewed, as Miss Quested was out of danger now. Late at night, Fielding wanted te see Professor Godbole, but the old fellow had gone to bed, and slipped off in a day or two to his new job at Mau.

Chapter 22

Adela lay for several days in the bungalow of Mr. McBryde. She had been touched by the sunstroke and hundreds of cactus spines had struck her body. Every now and then, Miss Derek and Mrs. Mc Bryde examined her through manifying glasses and she lay passive beneath their fingers, which developed the shock that had begun in the cave. Now she became very sensitive to touch. She hated anyone to touch her. She suffered both physically and mentally. She wanted to see Mrs. Moore, but she (Mrs. Moore) was the only person who kept away. Adela would often say : "I went into this detestable cave. I went into this detestable cave. I remember scratching the wall with my finger-nail, to start the usual echo, and then, as I was saying, there was this shadow, or sort of shadow, down the entrance tunnel, bottling me up. It seemed like an age, but I suppose the whole thing can't have lasted thirty seconds really. I hit at him with the glasses, he pulled me round the cave by the strap, it broke, I escaped. that's all. He never actually touched me once. It all seems such nonsense." Then her eyes would fill with tears, and she would say, "Naturally I'm upset, but I shall get over it." And then she would break down entirely. She was always trying to 'think the incident out,' always reminding herself that no harm had been done. There was the 'shock,' but what is that? For a time her own logic would convince her, then she would hear the echo again, weep, declare she was unworthy of Ronny, and hope her assailant would get the maximum penalty. Sometimes she would long to go out into the bazaars and ask pardon from everyone she met. "She felt that it was her crime, until the intellect reawakening, pointed out to her that

she was inaccurate here, and set her again upon her sterile round." She believed that all would be well if she could see Mrs. Moore. But the old lady did not come to see her.

After her physical recovery, Adela continued to abhor bodily contact with others. When Ronny called for her to take her to his bungalow again, she refused his arm. Though she had sympathy for Ronny and wondered how she could repay him for what he had suffered on her account, she felt about personal relationship rather as Mrs. Moore had felt as the train from Chandrapore carried Aziz's party towards the Marabar Hills. Adela was informed that she would have to appear in court and identify the prisoner, and submit to cross-examination by an Indian lawyer. Ronny would be with her and the case would be decided by Mr. Das, an assistant of Ronny.

Mr. McBryde told Adela that there was a letter for her from Mr. Fielding. The letter announced "Dr. Aziz is innocent." Then Ronny drove her back. Mr. Moore was revealed upon a sofa. She didn't get up when Adela entered, and the surprise of this roused Adela from her own troubles. Adela sat down and took her hand. It withdrew, and she felt that just as others repelled her, so did she repel Mrs. Moore. Mrs. Moore had been sunk in apathy and cynicism, and had shown no interest in anything, since her experience in the Marabar Caves. But when, Adela mentioned the echo, Mrs. Moore, for the first time, showed interest in her and she continued to listen to what Adela said. Adela asked her what the echo was. "If you don't know, you don't know,"replied Mrs. Moore; "I can't tell you." Yet, Adela was comforted by Mrs. Moore's presence, and felt the old lady was good and helped her to cure her echo. Ronny told Mrs. Moore that the trial was drawing near and she would have to appear in the witness-box for evidence. Mrs. Moore refused to do so. Adela also resented the idea. Mrs. Moore declared : "I shall attend your marriage, but not your trial. Then I shall go to England." Adela spoke Aziz's name

and asked herself for the first time if she had made a mistake. The sound of that name, which everyone at the civil station avoided mentioning—for it had become synonymous with the power of evil—"now rang out like the first note of a new symphony." At once the echo receded from Adela's mind. She told Ronny that Aziz was innocent: Mrs. Moore had said so. Ronny insisted that Mrs. Moore had said nothing of the sort, and to prove his paint he asked his mother if she had mentioned the prisoner. "I never said his name," Mrs. Moore repled; but she soon added indifferently, "Of course he is innocent." It was the first time she had expressed an opinion on the point. Ronny thought that his mother ought to leave India at once; she was doing no good to herself or to any one else there.

Chapter 23

The English ladies of Chandrapore had made an appeal to Lady Mellanoy, wife to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, and she had been gratified by their appeal. She showed her inability to do anything, as she was sailing for England, but she showed her desire to be informed if she could show sympathy in any other way. She offered Mrs. Moore accommodation in her own reserved cabin. It was like a gift from heaven. So Mrs. Moore had all she wished; she escaped the trial, the marriage, and the hot weather; she would return to England in comfort and distinction, and see her other children. At her son's suggestion, and by her own desire she departed. Ronny could not escort her to Bombay, for the local situation had become acute, and all officials had to remain at their posts. Even Anthony, her servant, was not allowed to accompany her, lest he should not return to give his evidence. So Mrs. Moore travelled with no one who could remind her of the past. This was a great relief to her.

Chapter 24

After Mrs. Moore's departure, at Chandrapore, the heat had grown almost intolerable. On the day of trial,

Adela got up early in the morning and offered her prayers to God. After that she told Mrs. Turton that she would probably break down under Mr. Amritrao's cross-examination and disgrace her friends. She also told them that her echo had come back again badly. She was taken in car to Ronny's private room, where a group of Englishmen had already collected. Some of the Mohammedan ladies had sworn to eat nothing until Aziz was acquitted. Presently the case was called. Mr. McBryde, the Superintendent of Police, started the proceedings by saying that Aziz was guilty ; that he was a man of loose life as the documents found with him at his arrest would testify and that according to Oriental Pathology the darker races are physically attracted by the fairer. He was interrupted by a sentence—'Even when the lady is so uglier than the gentleman ?' This comment upset Miss Quested. Her body resented being called ugly and trembled. Major Callendar requested the Magistrate that his patient should be given a seat on the platform. Then pleader Mahmoud Ali arose and requested the jury if his client could also be accommodated on the platform. Mr. Das became agitated and snubbed Mahmoud Ali severely. Then Amritrao, the barrister from Calcutta, objected to the presence of so many European ladies and gentleman on the platform. He asked the Magistrate that their place was with the rest of the public in the hall. Mr. Das ordered all of them to be so kind as to climb down. And the party, including Miss Quested, descended from its rash eminence. The news of their humiliation spread quickly and people jeered outside. This little excursion had a good effect on Miss Quested's nerves. Now she could see clearly everyone sitting in the court. She saw Fielding also, who was watching the proceedings, watchings her. The Magistrate was also happier. The proceedings of the case were resumed. Reference was made to the Marabar Caves being Jain in origin. The nullah which began at the group of caves concerned was mentioned again. The Superintendent of Police, in his case for the prosecution, spoke of Mrs. Moore. The name of Mrs. Moore brought on another storm. Mahmoud Ali shouted—who was this second English lady. He cried aloud that Mrs. Moore

had been smuggled out of India by the English because she would have proved Aziz innocent. He created such a tumult that Mrs. Moore's name was taken up by the audience. It spread outside the court-room to the crowd in the streets; and, there it was Indianized into , Esmiss Esmoor' and repeated over and over again in a rhythmical chant. Ronny was disturbed. He explained that before his mother had sailed she had taken to talk in her sleep about the Marabar, and must have been over-heard by the servants. It was revolting to hear his mother transformed into Esmiss Esmoor, a Hindu Goddess. Adela, though the echo in her mind had been particularly disturbing immediately before the trial, was now healthier, and more natural than usual When the chanting stopped, she was about to see clearly the events that had taken place in the Marabar Caves. Reaching down into the subconsciousness, she reconstructed them with detached and lucid vision of an artist. She saw clearly that Dr. Aziz did not follow her into the cave where she had believed she was attacked. She had always meant to tell the truth and nothing but the truth and, therefore, she withdrew the charge. Mr. Das rose nearly dead with the strain and declared. "The prisoner is released without one stain on his character : the question of costs will be decided elsewhere". And then the court broke out. Here were the English, whom their servants protected, there Aziz fainted in Hamidullah's arms. Victory on this side, defeat on that.

Chapter 25

The half suppressed emotions of the Indians were released. The court room were emptied. There was rejoicing in the streets. There was danger of a riot. Miss Quested had renounced her own people. She was now in the midst of the Indians who were shouting and crying; Fielding the only Englishman who was safe among the Indians came and took Adela away safely to the Government College. The Indians were taking out a Procession. They had decided to have rejoicings that night. Nawab Bahadur was trying to get the situation into hand. He was trying to cool down the passion of the crowd. The

Englishmen living at the Civil Station were keeping watch as they feared an attack. The heat was claiming its own. And presently everybody entered the world of dreams.

Chapter 26

Evening approached by the time Fielding and Miss Quested met and had the first of their numerous, curious conversations. He had hoped, when he woke up, to find some one had fetched her away, but the College remained isolated from the rest of the universe. She asked whether she could have a sort of interview', and, when he made no reply, said, 'Have you any explanation of my extraordinary behaviour ? Fielding spoke out : 'Why make such a charge if you were going to withdraw it" At this Adela told him that her echo had gone. She had no longer any secrets. She had been feeling unwell ever since that expedition to the caves, and possibly before that. Perhaps she was suffering from hallucination. Fielding said to Miss Quested, "One of three things certainly happened in the Marabar. One of four things. Either Aziz is guilty, which is what your friends think ; or you invented the charge out of malice, which is what my friends think ; or you have had an hallucination. I'm very much inclined now that you tell me that you felt unwell before the expedition – it's an important piece of evidence —I believe that you yourself broke the strap of the field glasses ; you were alone in that cave the whole time." Miss Quested seemed to be convinced by Fieldings's arguments Now coming to the fourth possibility. Fielding said that it might be the guide. Unluckily Aziz hit him on the face, and he got a fright and disappeared. 'Perhaps it was the guide,' Adela said quietly and suddenly the question lost all interest for her. After some time the City Magistrate, Ronny, came to the College and told Adela that he had received a cable to the effect that his mother, Mrs. Moore, was dead. He seemed to be quite upset and broken down. Hamidullah was also present at Mr. Fielding's at that time. He agreed not to tell Aziz about Mrs. Moore's death till the morrow, because he was fond of her, and the bad news might spoil his fun,

Fielding and Hamidullah thought that Ronny might be taking Adela away with him, but it did not happen. Ronny told them that actually he had come to bring Miss Quested away, but her visit to the Turtons had ended, and there was no other arrangement so far, because his were bachelor quarters. It was, therefore, decided that Adela should stay at the College. Fielding told her that she would not have any difficulty and she would be quite safe in the College. Fielding himself would go away and come back on Thursday. Fielding and Hamidullah left the College and started to meet Dr. Aziz. On their way to Dilkusha, Hamidullah asked Mr. Amritrao whether he had considered what sum Miss Quested ought to pay as compensation. 'Twenty thousand rupees', replied the barrister. No more was then said, but the remark horrified Fielding. He could not bear to think of the queer honest girl losing her money and possibly her young man too.

Chapter 27

The Victory Banquet was over, and the revellers lay asleep in a moonlit night. Fielding was talking to Aziz. Fielding tried to convince Aziz that he should let Miss Quested off. She must pay all his costs, that way only fair, but at the same time, she should not be treated like a conquered enemy. Fielding told Aziz that Adela was perfectly genuine and very brave When she saw she was wrong, she pulled herself up with a jerk and said so. She did not care for her friends, for future life. It was really heroic on her part to draw back the charge when the entire British Raj was pushing her forward Aziz could not be persuaded by Fielding, but ultimately he told him that he would consult Mrs Moore and that would settle the whole matter. Aziz knew that Mrs. Moore had sailed for England, but even then he believed that she was present in India. And when Fielding gave him the news of Mrs. Moore's death he simply couldn't believe it. It struck to Fielding at that time that people are not really dead until they are felt to be dead. As long as there is some misunderstanding about them, they possess

a sort of immortality. He had tried to kill Mrs. Moore this evening, on the roof of the Nawab Bahadur's house but she still eluded him, and the atmosphere remained tranquil.

Chapter 28

The death of Mrs. Moore provoked strange reactions in Chandrapore. People began to weave fantastic stories about her. Many legends sprang up concerning her death. Some people believed that an Englishman had killed his mother for trying to save an Indian's life. Some said that a cow had been killed, and some believed that a crocodile with the tusks of a wild boar had come out of the Ganges. At one period two distinct tombs containing Esmiss Esmoor's remains were reported. The Superintendent of Police went to see these tombs, and he found that people had started worshipping her like a goddess. Ronny's conscience was, however, not clear, but his attitude towards her remained unkind. How tiresome she had been with her patronage of Aziz ! What a bad influence did she exert on Adela ! And now she still gave trouble with ridiculous 'tombs,' mixing herself up with the natives. And Adela ! She would have to depart too. He really could not marry her—it would mean the end of his career. She remained at Government College, by Fielding's courtesy—but no one would receive her at the civil station. And moreover, she had killed his love, and it had never been very robust ; they would never have achieved betrothal but for the accident to the Nawab Bahadur's car. So, he dismissed the idea of Adela from his mind.

Chapter 29

The visit of the Lieutenant Governor of the Province was another important event in Chandrapore. He congratulated Fielding on having taken the 'broad, the sensible, and the only possible, charitable view from the first. He extended a cordial invitation to Fielding to rejoin the club, and then he went back fully satisfied. Fielding and Adela had a long talk. Both of them were

unreligious, but both could get occasional glimpses of the supernatural. "Were there worlds beyond which they could never touch, or did all that is possible enter their consciousness? They could not tell. They only realized that their outlook was more or less similar' and found in this a satisfaction perhaps life is a mystery, not a muddle; they could not tell." Fielding had dissuaded Aziz, under the influence of Mrs. Moore's name, from claiming damages from Adela. And now Adela had decided to leave for England. Fielding assured her that he would see her in England Ten days later Adela went off, by the same route as her dead friend. The monsoon had set in. Adela decided that her first duty on returning to England was to look up those other children of Mrs. Moore's, Ralph and Stella, then she would turn to her profession.

Chapter 30

The trial of Dr. Aziz resulted in a better understanding between the Hindus and the Moslems of Chandrapore. Mr. Das, the magistrate, called on Dr. Aziz and asked two favours from him. One was a remedy for shingles; and the other, a poem for his brother-in-law's new monthly magazine. Dr. Aziz immediately wrote a prescription for him, and promised to write for him a poem also. Aziz, however, wrote poetry in a conventional manner. His poem was again about the decay of Islam and the brevity of love; it had no relation to his personal life. This evening he longed to compose a new song which should be acclaimed by multitudes and even sung in the fields. The song of future, he thought, must transcend creed. But in what language he should write—that was the problem. He could, therefore, never write a poem for Mr. Bhattacharya, but it had an effect. It led him towards the vague and bulky figure of a mother-land. Not until she is a nation will her sons be treated with respect. The English, whom he had laughed at or ignored, persecuted him everywhere; they had even thrownnets over his dreams. He, therefore, decided to get away from British India, even to a poor job. He told

Hamidullah that he would try for some post as doctor in some native Hindu State. Hamidullah asked Aziz whether he had not heard the rumour about Miss Quested and Mr. Fielding. It was in the air that when Adela stayed at the College, Fielding used to visit her late in the evening, and that they had some illegitimate relations.

Chapter 31.

Aziz had no sense of evidence. The sequence of his emotions decided his beliefs, and led to the tragic coolness between himself and Fielding. He assumed that Fielding had some illegitimate relations with Miss Quested. He had no objection on moral grounds to his friend's amusing himself, but he resented him making up to this particular woman, whom he still regarded as his enemy; also, why had he not been told ? What is friendship without confidence ? He asked Fielding about his relationship with Adela, but Fielding did not pay much attention to his question. Aziz became all the more suspicious. The girl had surely been Fielding's mistress when she stopped in the College—Aziz thought. But was that all ? Perhaps it was Fielding who followed her into the cave.........No ; impossible. Fielding hadn't been on the Kawa Dol at all. Impossible. Ridiculous Fielding was shocked to see the changed behaviour of Dr. Aziz. He left for England, leaving, behind a suspiccion in the mind of Dr. Aziz that he would marry Miss Quested in England.

Chapter 32.

Fielding reached Egypt, stayed there for a few days. and, then, re-embarked at Alexandria. Crete welcomed him next with the long snowy ridge of its mountains and then came to Venice with all its glory. Ultimately, he took the train north ward, and tender romantic fancies that he thought were dead for ever flowered when he saw the buttercups and daisies of June.

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PART III

TEMPLE

Chapter 33

Some hundreds of miles westward of the Marabar Hills, and two years later in time, Professor Godbole could be seen involved in the greatest religious festival of the year, the Krishna Janmashtmi, during which the birth of the Lord of the Universe is re-enacted. Professor Godbole stood before the image of the god and he chanted :

> Tukaram, Tukaram,
> Thou art my father and mother and everybody.
> Tukaram, Tukaram ....

The corridors of the palace at Mau were gorgeously decorated with festoons, pictures and photographs. The Hindus belonging to various classes filled the corridors. There were business-men, officers courtiers, members of the royal household, and the toiling subjects. The assembly was in a tender, happy state unknown to an English crowd. Music was being played upon on every side. Rain fell at interval throughout the night. Professor Godbole was leading the choir at the ceremony, attempting to find unity, to connect, connect, and connect until the universe was one. At midnight the Lord was born.

.... The clock struck midnight, and simultaneously the rending note of the conch broke forth, followed by the trumpeting of elephants : all who had packets of powder threw them at the altar, and in the rosy dust and incense, and clanging and shouts, Infinite Love took

upon itself the form of Shri Krishna, and saved the world. All sorrow was annihilated, not only for Indians, but for foreigners, birds, caves, railways, and the stars : all became joy, all laughter ; there had never been disease nor doubt, misunderstanding, cruelty, fear.

The birth of the Lord was celebrated with great mirth and jollity. Various games and sports were played Butter played a prominent part in these. The Lord could play practical jokes with himself. He set His own-turbans on fire, and stole His own petticoats when He bathed. The corridors, the courtyard were filled with benign confusion. As Professor, Godbole left the ceremony in the morning, he reflected upon his spiritual experiences. He visualised the images of Mrs. Moore and desired to place himself in her position and to say to God : 'Come, come, come, come". This was all he could do.

Chapter 34

Aziz was also at Mau ; he was one of the Rajah's doctors. And Fielding, as Aziz learnt from Godbole, had just arived at Mau with his wife and her brother (for Fielding had indeed married in England) on an official visit as an education officer. Godbole was delighted at Fielding's visit, though his religious duties allowed him to give Fielding very little of his time Since Aziz was a Mohammedan, he had, of course, no part in the Krishna Festival but he did not intend to see Fielding.

Chapter 35

They, however, met by chance at a Mohammedan shrine. Fielding and his brother-in-law entered the shrine, only to be chased out at once to Aziz's amusement by bees which had nested there. Fielding's brother-in-law was stung ; and the incident brought Aziz and Fielding together. Aziz told them that he would send an ointment to the Guest House. After having some talks with Fielding, Aziz discovered his foolish mistake. He found that Fielding had married Mrs. Moore's daughter, Stella, and not Miss Quested ; Aziz was shaken for a

moment when he heard Mrs. Moore's name, but he parted from Fielding, telling him that he wished no one who was English to be his friend. He, however, returned to his house excited and happy.

Chapter 36

The same evening Aziz took an ointment to the European Guest House for Ralph Moore's stings. He found Ralph alone. Stella and Fielding had gone to the tank to watch the torchlight procession from the water. He was at first harsh and even cruel to Ralph; but Ralph's voice, his remarks, and his appearance recalled Mrs. Moore to his mind. The noise of the religious festival, which could be heard, had also a beneficent effect. And Aziz's feelings towards Ralph became kindly. Ralph detected the change at once, to Aziz's surprise. Could Ralph always tell whether a stranger was his friend? Aziz asked. Ralph said he could. "Then you are an Oriental." Aziz told him—and with a little shudder remembered that he had spoken the same words to Mrs. Moore, when he first met her at the Mosque at Chandrapore. Ralph was indeed Mrs. Moore's son; and in gratitude to her Aziz took Ralph to the tank and rowed him out on it to watch the Hindu procession Ralph seemed to have a strange affinity with the Hindus. He directed Aziz to row near the goal of the procession. And in the darkness, amidst religious fervour of the Hindus; amidst rain and thunder and the beating of drums, Aziz's boat collided with Fielding's, the two boats struck the model of the village of Gokul, and Stella and Fielding, Aziz and Ralph, were thrown together into the shallow waters of the tank. The accident restored friendship between Aziz and Fielding. The rain went on. The singing continued, and everybody and everything was drenched through.

Chapter 37

The boat-accident had restored friendship between Aziz and Fielding, but both were conscious of the fact that they would not meet again after Fielding left Mau.

So Aziz and Fielding went for their last ride in the jungles of Mau : Fielding had joined forces with Anglo-India, and Aziz had thrown in his lot with India ; each had hardened since Chandrapore. And the difference between their characters, the difference between emotion and intellect, remained as ever. Meanwhile they were granted this moment of companionship. They rode between jolly bushes and rocks. Aziz showed him a letter that he wanted to send to Miss Quested. A charming letter indeed ! He wanted to thank his old enemy for her fine behaviour two years back : perfectly plain was it now that she had behaved well. Fielding was pleased to see this letter. Aziz told him that he wanted to do kind actions all round and wipe out the wretched business of the Marabar for ever. Fielding spoke of his wife and told Aziz that she too believed that the Marabar was wiped out. He further said that his wife was after something ; both she and Ralph suffered from restlessness, but, at Mau, she found something soothing, some solution of her queer troubles. She and her brother like Hinduism. Then the conversation turned to politics. The English must clear out of India, Aziz said. Fielding retorted that Indians needed English help The English must leave, Aziz insisted : and they would be made to go if they did not quit India of their own accord. And after the English are gone, he said, riding his horse against Fielding's "you and I shall be friends."

"Why can't we friends now ?" said the other, holding him affectionately. "It's what I want. It's what you want."

But the horses didn't want it—they swerved apart ; the earth didn t want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single file ; the temples, the tank,' the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau beneath ; they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices : "No, not yet," and the sky said, "he not there."

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A Passage to India